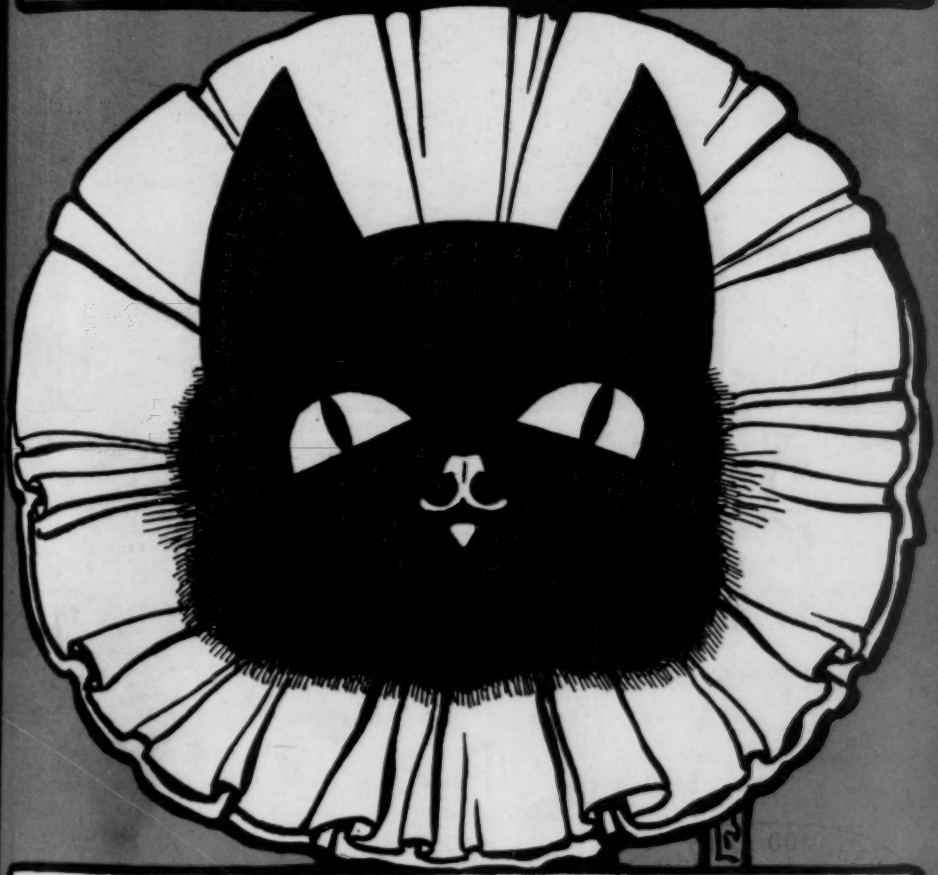
The Black Cat

Copyright, 1903, by The Shortstory Publishing Co.



August 1903

RECEIVED
JUL 21 1903
PERIODICAL DIV.

Mrs. Knapp's Lion.
Charles Webster Kimball.
By Grace of the Bishop.
Fannie May Trousdale.
The Ticklemore Boom.
$100 Prize Story.
F. E. Chase.
A Mountain Quail.
M. J. Enright.
The Contents of Her Watch.
Carroll Watson Rankin.
The Shape of Fear.
Virginia M. Cornell.

5 CENTS

Vol. VIII., No. II. Whole No. 86. Copyright, 1903, by The Shortstory Publishing Co.

THE SHORTSTORY PUBLISHING CO 144 HIGH ST BOSTON, MASS.

PRINT IN BINDING

"AND WHAT DOES YOUR MOTHER THINK I CAN DO WITH THIS?"

A fast disappearing feature of New England life the old Cobbler, known and loved in every town an hamlet.

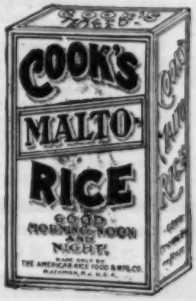
The picture which we show above is taken fro life—the old Cobbler of Gilmanton, N. H.—no nearly ninety years of age, and quite a famou character in the neighborhood.

A picture of this, size 15 in. x 18 in., without adve tising, on paper suitable for framing, sent to any ad dress on receipt of ten cents in stamps.

Sorosis Shoes, A. E. LITTLE & CO., LYNN, MASS.

Cook's Malto-Rice

A Pure, Perfectly Cooked Rice Malted



RICE contains more nutriment and supplies more energy to the human body than anything that grows out of the ground.

MALT as a marvelously beneficial stimulant, man has known for generations, but only yesterday did he learn to combine it to the greatest advantage.

COOK'S MALTO-RICE

is a perfect blending of

Malt and Rice

Most Ad-Writers Earn Big Salaries

but they *all* make a good living; and what can a man want more than that? We can qualify you to enter this profession in a very few months, and do it in your own home, by mail.

Other professions which we teach are: ILLUSTRATING, JOURNALISM, PROOFREADING, BOOKKEEPING, STENOGRAPHY, ELECTRICITY and ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING.

Our Electrical Engineering Course, costing you only Thirty Dollars, is the finest and most practical ever compiled, and is taught by the ablest instructors.

For further information, we would suggest that you write for a copy of our latest book, entitled "Struggles With the World," which we will send you free, if you are really interested in this announcement; and when you write us, we would suggest that you mention which profession you are interested in.

Be sure and address us like this:

Correspondence Institute of America
BOX 650 - SCRANTON, PA.

The Cowboy and The Lady

The Minister
The Banker
The Lawyer
The Drummer
The Doctor
The Merchant
The Teacher
The Farmer
The Student
The Clerk

Who enjoys a story that is very much all right from beginning to end will find a Top Notcher in

Through Forbidden Gates

Just issued by The Shortstory Publishing Company, and sold by The American News Company and its branches at 50 cents. It is an attractive 248-page volume of Prize Stories from The Black Cat, and it's a Corker

If your dealer won't get it for you get another dealer

BOOK-KEEPING TAUGHT FREE

A GOOD POSITION and a large salary always await an expert Book-keeper. We teach you book-keeping thoroughly by mail, and make absolutely no charge for tuition until we place you in a paying position. If you wish to better yourself, write for our guarantee offer and our **FREE** book.

Commercial Correspondence Schools
Drawer 23H, Rochester, N. Y.

LEARN TO WRITE ADVERTISEMENTS

Taught by Mail Thoroughly

Taught by the founders of the original school. Taught in an expert manner enabling you to earn expert salary. Six years' success and hundreds of successful graduates. Large prospectus free on request.

PAGE-DAVIS CO., Suite 25, 90 Wabash Ave, Chicago.

Be a Writer

Get started right. We aid you with valuable hints, helps, ideas, and suggestions. Our authors are making an actual success. Send for our "Editor's Special Offer." MSS. revised. NOT A SCHOOL.

WRITERS' AID ASSOCIATION, 150 Nassau St., New York

Authors' Agency.

Eleventh Year. Candid, suggestive **Criticism,** literary and technical **Revision,** practical **Advice, Disposal.**

References: Hezekiah Butterworth. Mrs. Burton Harrison, Thos. Nelson Page, Mary E. Wilkins, and others.

Send stamp for Booklet to **WM. A. DRESSER, R. 10, 400 Broadway, Cambridge, Mass.**

Mention The Black Cat.

BE A PROOFREADER

Women receive same salaries as men, $15 to $35 a week. Proofreaders always in demand. Send for free booklet, "PRACTICAL PROOFREADING"; tells how. **NATIONAL PRESS ASSOCIATION,** The Baldwin, No. 68, Indianapolis, Ind.

STORIES WANTED

We want **realistic** stories of from 1,500 to 5,000 words. Full particulars and sample copy, 10c. Send to-day. **YOUNG'S MAGAZINE, 622 Mail and Express Bldg., New York.**

SONG-WRITERS AND POETS

A SUCCESSFUL SONG will MAKE YOU RICH. We write music to your words, complete and arrange compositions. **Groom Music Co., Steinway Hall, Chicago.**

LEARN ELECTRO-PLATING

THE well-known **Paragon Plating Outfit,** with accompanying printed instructions and harmless chemicals, enables ANY ONE to learn practical electro-plating; it is adapted for household use and small custom work. You can gold-plate watch-cases, jewelry, ornaments, etc., and silver-plate knives, forks, spoons, etc., and nickel-plate small articles of brass and steel.

$2.00

Apparatus, with Silver or Nickel, $2.00
With supply of Gold, - - $2.50
With Gold and Silver and Nickel, $3.75

Mailed on receipt of price by money-order or registered letter. Circulars and prospectus free. Manufacturers' PLATING OUTFITS for factory, workshop, and custom-work. Address Dep't C.

Electrotechnic & Chemical Company, (Inc.)
(Agents Wanted). 72 Washington Square, South, New York City.

SHORT STORIES

bring high prices. Thousands of good stories, defective in some particular, which might easily be remedied, make up the great mass of "rejected manuscripts." Our School of Journalism, in charge of successful authors, short-story writers, magazine contributors, criticises, corrects and revises, as well as teaches how to write. Write for booklet.

National Correspondence Institute, 26-51 Second National Bank Bldg., Washington, D. C.

WRITERS

who have made use of our services and the services of others whose business it is to edit, review and market manuscripts, say our methods are best and our terms most reasonable. We would be pleased to send any writer, amateur or professional, a copy of our free booklet on request. A postal card will do. Address

UNITED PRESS SYNDICATE
618 Majestic Building, Indianapolis, Ind.

Mss. Syndicated

To nearly 2,000 publishers or sold to exclusive publishers — **on commission;** also criticised, revised, and prepared for publication; **Journalism and Story-Writing** taught by mail. Send for free booklet, **"Writing for Profit";** tells the whole story. Thornton West, Editor-in-chief; founded 1895.

National Press Ass'n, 68 The Baldwin, Indianapolis

LEARN PROOFREADING.

If you possess a fair education, why not utilize it at a genteel and uncrowded profession paying $15 to $35 weekly? Situations always obtainable. We are the original instructors by mail.

HOME CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL, Philadelphia

To the World's Fair

WITHOUT COST

Would you like to visit the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, at St. Louis next year, without expense? The trip includes not only transportation but accommodations for one week at one of the best hotels, tickets to the grounds, and all expenses. Write to

OUTING

or see particulars in the August number now on sale everywhere. 25 cents a copy.

Representatives of OUTING in all parts of the United States are making substantial sums each week. More to be appointed. No experience necessary. Address

Circulation Department of Outing
241 Fifth Ave., New York City

Malta-Vita
GIFT DISTRIBUTION

"No Work, No Heat; Just Cream, Then Eat." MALTA-VITA, the delicious, malted, flaked, cooked, and toasted whole wheat food, purest and most nutritious, always ready to serve.

SAVE THE COUPONS

In all packages of **Malta-Vita** And get a

$365.00 KIMBALL PIANO, HIGH-GRADE GOLD-FILLED WATCH, ENAMELED EIGHT-DAY MANTEL CLOCK

A1 standard plate knives, forks, sugar shells, butter knives, spoons all sizes, also fountain pens. Full particulars on the coupons in each package. Do not miss this opportunity of securing valuable premiums free. For sale by all first-class grocers.

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.
Two Copies Received
JUL 21 1903
Copyright Entry
CLASS XXc. No.
COPY B.

The Black Cat

A Monthly Magazine of Original Short Stories.

Copyright, 1903, by The Shortstory Publishing Company. All rights reserved.

Vol. VIII., No. 11. Whole No., 95. AUGUST, 1903. 5 cents a copy. 50 cents a year.

Entered at the Post-Office at Boston, Mass., as second-class matter.

THE BLACK CAT is devoted exclusively to original, unusual, fascinating stories — every number is complete in itself. It publishes no serials, translations, borrowings, or stealings. It pays nothing for the name or reputation of a writer, but the highest price on record for *Stories that are Stories*, and it pays not according to length, but according to strength. To receive attention, manuscripts must be sent unrolled, fully prepaid, and accompanied by addressed and stamped envelope for return. All MSS. are received and returned at their writers' risk.

CAUTION. — *The entire contents of* THE BLACK CAT *are protected by copyright, and publishers everywhere are cautioned against reproducing any of the stories, either wholly or in part.*

Mrs. Knapp's Lion.*

BY CHARLES WEBSTER KIMBALL.

THE Alpha Reading Circle, a select literary club, composed of certain of the ladies of Parsons, had been called to order, and the minutes of the last meeting had been read and approved. The usual buzz of conversation prevailed and when the secretary again rose to read a communication to the Circle, her voice could hardly be heard. As she proceeded, however, those near her signed to the others to be silent, and by the time she had reached the end of the letter, of which the following is a copy, one could have heard a pin drop:

99 BLUE AVENUE, NEW YORK

MY DEAR FRIENDS:

I have been seeking for some time a quiet place where I can spend a few months this summer at work on my new novel which I am preparing for publication, and have fixed upon Parsons as just the place for me. Your little city is quiet enough for such work as mine, and yet possesses that refined atmosphere that is so favorable to literary effort.

May I ask you to refer me to some place where I can obtain suitable accommodations. I do not care to go to a hotel unless absolutely necessary. Unfortunately, I

* Copyright, 1903, by The Shortstory Publishing Company. All rights reserved.

am unacquainted in your delightful little city, and hence am forced to ask this favor of your organization. I am emboldened, however, by a hope that a sympathy with those of my craft will prompt you to pardon me for my presumption.

Thanking you in advance, I remain,

Very truly yours,

WALLACE PAYNE.

The ladies of the Alpha Reading Circle gasped. Wallace Payne, the young man with the charming personality who, after writing a score of clever short stories, had jumped to fame at one bound with his novel, "Roses in Bloom," whose praises were now being sounded by the critics of two continents, Wallace Payne coming to Parsons!

"You have heard the letter," said the president, breaking the silence. It needs no explanation. It would seem to me to be in order for some one to move that it be entered on the minutes of the meeting, verbatim. Do I hear a motion to that effect?"

The motion was made, seconded and carried, and the ladies of the A. R. C., recovering from their astonishment, proceeded to discuss the great event. Mrs. Fridgie's paper on Shakespeare and all the other dishes in the literary feast that had been prepared for the afternoon fell flat, and a genuine relief was felt when the meeting adjourned and the members hastened off to spread the news.

By night it was all over the town. Mrs. De Vere, who had founded the Alpha, wept with joy as she realized that at last she was reaping the reward of her efforts. Parsons, the seat of the Alpha Reading Circle, had been chosen above a thousand other places as the birthplace of a great book, and all because of the literary atmosphere which the A. R. C. had created. Not when the Governor had made a visit to the town four years before had there been such excitement. There was even talk of a brass band at the depot on the great author's arrival and plans for a torchlight procession, but the ladies of the Alpha Reading Circle put a firm veto on all such schemes. However appropriate for a Governor, they explained, brass bands and torches were not the things with which to greet a great literary genius.

The next morning's mail carried out half a score of letters addressed to Wallace Payne. No one had presumed for a moment

to direct the author to any boarding house. Each letter was an invitation, worded as cordially as the writer knew how, and extending the freedom of her household to the great author and imploring his acceptance. Almost every member of the Alpha sent an invitation. Mrs. Robinson, wife of the capitalist; Mrs. Jaedicke, spouse of the retired brewer; Mrs Fridgie, whose husband was the editor of the Parsons Planet; Mrs. Van Rensselaer, who sported a genealogy a yard long, and Mrs. Knapp, wife of the Agriculturists' Bank's president, were among the notables who offered the freedom of the manor to the author of "Roses in Bloom."

In due time the lion was heard from. There were neat regrets by "Mr. Payne's secretary" for Mesdames Robinson, Jaedicke, Fridgie and the rest, and for Mrs. Knapp an autograph letter from the author, saying that he would be pleased to accept her hospitality. Two weeks later, Wallace Payne arrived. He was met at the train by Mrs. Knapp and her husband and driven to the Knapp homestead in a smart trap. The guest chamber, a bare, cold room on the north side of the house, was not for him. Mrs. Knapp renounced her own boudoir, a sunny south room with a great elm growing by one of the windows, and to this Wallace Payne was conducted.

Pleading fatigue from his journey, the great author went to his room to snatch a few hours' sleep. He was aroused at dinner time and escorted down-stairs to meet Miss Cecilia Knapp, the daughter, who was just home from Vassar. At dinner he was informed that he would be expected to roar that very night. A reception was to be held in his honor at the Knapp home by the ladies of the Alpha Reading Circle who, although on the verge of dissolution on learning that Mrs. Knapp had been the favored one, had in the course of two weeks forgotten their chagrin in the excitement of the affair and their triumph over the Clionian, a rival organization, a year younger than the Alpha.

The favored of Parsons's literary ones who attended the reception were charmed with the personality of the guest of honor. The author did not look like his pictures, but he answered to the many descriptions they had read of him. He was young — not over twenty-five — with a clearly modeled face, long black hair and a strange mysticism in his eyes. This man, the pet of New York

society, did not appear in the least bored at the Alpha reception, and in fact seemed quite pleased with the attention accorded him.

In spite of his literary bent, the author was a thorough man of the world. He chatted gaily with those of the younger set who had attended the reception, listened deferentially and interestedly to the old ladies who told him of how they had read his book and how they had always longed to see him, told a few interesting literary anecdotes for the benefit of the company and smoked a cigar with the young men on the veranda. Before the evening was over he was voted just lovely by the girls, a most delightful young man by the matrons, and a jolly good fellow by the men.

Promptly the next morning the author began work on his new novel. He begged Mrs. Knapp to see that he was not disturbed, and locked himself in his room. The house that morning hung heavy with the presence of genius. Mrs. Knapp sent Ham, the coachman, to disperse some little boys who were playing ball on the vacant lot next door, and instructed her cook to make absolutely no noise in her kitchen work. This done, she seated herself with a book in the room underneath that occupied by the author. The volume lay neglected on her knees, however, and with bated breath she listened to the slight shuffling made by Mr. Payne as he worked at his desk and to his footsteps as he occasionally paced the room, searching for an inspiration.

When Wallace Payne came down to lunch at noon, he explained that it was his habit to work only in the forenoon. During the afternoon the author chatted with Mrs. Knapp and listened with absorbed interest while she discoursed on her favorite theme, the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam. Then, at her suggestion, he went out with Miss Cecilia for a drive in the trap. On the street they were met by the editor of the Parsons Planet, who demanded an interview. But Payne requested him, on the honor of a brother knight of the pen, as he put it, not to print a word about his presence. Newspaper publicity was just what he had come to Parsons to avoid, so he said, and if the city dailies learned of his presence through the Planet he would be in for just what he had endured before he left the city, and would, reluctantly, be compelled to leave Parsons. "I was interviewed and written up and dogged until I was nearly wild," said he. "Why, they even had it

that I was engaged and married, which was absolutely untrue!" — and Miss Cecilia's heart gave a jump, while she assumed her sweetest smile.

Cecilia had been sent to college to acquire a finish, and so thorough had been the finishing process, and so patronizing had become her air towards her friends, both masculine and feminine, when she returned, that she was "persona non grata" in her social set. But the acquisition of the author had sent her at one bound to the leadership of Parsons society, and the smiles and salutations she received that afternoon would have befitted a reigning queen.

After dinner, the lion went down town to the clubrooms of the Bucks, of whom Mr. Knapp was a leading member, to lend his presence to a smoker given in his honor. The author was as much at home there as in the drawing-room. He commented affably upon and partook freely of the club's best drinkables, responded to a toast with a neat little speech and consented to sit in at a little session of fifty-cent ante after the festivities, from which he arose towards morning richer by several hundred dollars. Mr. Knapp beamed with delight as he heard the admiring remarks which the gamiest of the Bucks passed upon his guest.

A week rolled by and the novel progressed. Mr. Payne worked steadily as a clock each morning, and the pile of neat manuscript in the drawer grew day by day. Mrs. Knapp, who at first regarded discussion of the great work as a sacrilege, became bolder, and before long the novel was the regular topic of discussion at the breakfast table. The author told them of its conception, gave them an idea of its scope and described a few of the strong situations.

Miss Knapp, who had literary ambitions, and who had published numerous verselets in the Planet and written many stories which were promptly returned by the magazines to which she had sent them, would slip into the author's room when he was out and look with awe at the manuscript of the new novel. The letters which the author left about she read without scruple. They were nearly all from magazine publishers, asking for stories or begging for a book manuscript. One was from a magazine editor returning a manuscript as unavailable. It was very different, though, from the printed forms which had accompanied her own rejected stories.

The editor fairly grovelled in endeavoring to explain why the story was unsuitable for his magazine, and begged to have the privilege of examining another manuscript. To Cecilia, these missives seemed like messages from the gods.

Mr. Payne had become very much in demand. He was wined and dined and his afternoons and evenings were filled with engagements. Nevertheless, he did not neglect the Knapps. He started a flirtation with Cecilia, and learning by chance of her literary tribulations, he demanded to see the rejected stories. "A perfect shame!" was his verdict, when he had read them. Still, said he, it was no more than could be expected. The literary mart, he explained to her, was a world of pull. Merit alone counted for but little. The great thing was influence with publishers or with a well-known author. That was how he had succeeded in getting his first work published. He promised that he would take her stories with him to New York on his return, and personally see to their acceptance by the editor of any magazine she might name. Miss Cecilia was so encouraged by this that she immediately began work on a novel, the scene of which was laid in Italy — a country, by the way, which she had never visited — and which fairly seethed with passion.

That evening he was unusually attentive to the banker's daughter. "I believe he's going to propose," Cecilia whispered to her mother, after the author had retired. "I think it's only a question of a few days."

Parsons awoke to a double mystery the next morning. The Agriculturists' Bank had been entered during the night with the aid of a skeleton key, the vault had been opened by some one who knew the combination of its lock, and sixty thousand dollars in currency had been stolen. Wallace Payne, the author, the guest of the Knapps, had disappeared from their residence.

The local authorities could find absolutely no clue to the perpetrator of the bank robbery, so after a hasty meeting of the bank's directors a telegram was sent to the city for a squad of detectives, and during the wait for their arrival everybody concerned sat still and wondered.

Mrs. Knapp and the members of the A. R. C. were undecided as to what had become of the author. Some reasoned that he had

been abducted by the bank robbers and was being held for ransom. Others were so unkind as to hint that they did not believe that Mrs. Knapp's guest was an author at all, and that he and the bank robber were one and the same person. Eccentricity of genius was the general opinion. The author had probably fled to the woods and was communing with nature in search of an inspiration.

On looking into the room left deserted by the author, Miss Knapp discovered something that enshrouded in even deeper mystery the disappearance of Wallace Payne. Stowed away in a drawer of the desk which he had always kept locked, as Cecilia knew, was a bundle of unbound book sheets with extraordinarily wide margins. She scanned the first chapter of the novel — for it was obviously such — and discovered that she had read the same thing before. She brought out the precious manuscript of The Novel — the one on which the author had been working — and compared the two. Every word of the three hundred and sixty-five pages of manuscript had been copied from the loose printed sheets!

The next discovery was made by Mr. Knapp, who found the following paragraph in a New York city paper:

> Wallace Payne, author of "Roses in Bloom," which is now in its four hundred and fiftieth thousand, was among the passengers on the *Oceanic*, which arrived to-day. The author has spent the summer in Europe, accompanied by his bride.
>
> On opening up their flat, Mr. and Mrs. Payne were astonished to find that their apartments had been broken into, and ransacked during their absence. Strange to relate, however, although there was much of value in the house, nothing was missed except some of the author's business correspondence, and the proof sheets of his new novel, "Lottie Karr," which is soon to appear.

It was then remembered in the Knapp household that their favored guest had come down to breakfast one morning with a worried look, which he accounted for by stating that he had encountered a difficulty with his plot, caused by trying to write about something with which he was unfamiliar. Questioned by the family, he said that he wanted to have his hero, for a joke, lock the heroine up in a safe-deposit vault of an old court-house, and then forget the combination, almost suffocating the young lady before she could be rescued.

"And the trouble is?" queried his genial host.

"The trouble is that I do not know anything about the working of safe-deposit vaults and combination locks. I'd fake it, but in these days of realism the writer has to be painfully accurate or the watchful critic will jump on him."

"Don't worry; come down to the bank with me after breakfast, and I'll illustrate what you want to know when we open the vault."

"Thanks!" said the prospective son-in-law. When the proposed lesson had been given, he exclaimed: "I'll make the scene as realistic as if I had opened safes all my life."

The ladies of Parsons who had coveted the literary prize at first, now rejoiced in escaping Mrs. Knapp's lion, but the Alpha Reading Circle never met again.

By Grace of the Bishop.*

BY FANNIE MAY TROUSDALE.

HRIST CHURCH had been four months without a rector, and in the meantime the congregation had grown indifferent to religious observances and well satisfied with the comfort to be found only at home during the heat of a Louisiana summer, whose sun seemed to have singled out the little town of St. Martinsville for its most ardent attentions.

It was, indeed, one of those prolonged, droughty, insupportable summers, wearing to the strength as well as to the patience. It was so hot that the resin stood out in sticky beads, and the paint was blistered on every house that faced west. The bayou skirting the town moved slimy and sullen, protected as it was by overhanging willows and mulberries that warded off the sun.

When the Bishop made known to the congregation that on the last Sunday in June their spiritual welfare would be taken in charge by Rev. Paul Somerville, who had just arrived from England, they were neither glad nor thankful; feeling no special need of a shepherd, they resented the idea of being placed under the guidance of one whose past interests had lain so far apart from those of St. Martinsville.

So it was that, on that particular Sabbath morning, as they wended their ways by twos and threes through the blistering sand toward the small ivy-clad church, which summoned them with a weak-voiced and unmusical bell, they were filled with resentment rather than piety, not unmixed with a little spice of curiosity.

This same congregation had been the despair of the Bishop for many years. He was even credited with the assertion, made out of the desperation of the situation, that he felt confident that

* Copyright, 1903, by The Shortstory Publishing Company. All rights reserved.

St. Paul himself could not please Christ Church. Bickering and strife had always prevailed; the rector was either too High Church or he was "stuck up" and did not visit enough; or he was known to drink beer from the saloon, whither he carried a pitcher daily for his allowance; or he went out of his way and meddled with politics. In short, everything prevailed except peace and contentment.

The last letter from the Bishop said that he felt that he had, at last, found the right man for Christ Church; one whose credentials were of the best, and whose experience was such as to enable him to find out the peculiar needs of the people. He had besought the blessing of God upon both church and rector, and begged the indulgence of the congregation toward a man who had strongly interested and attracted him.

"He impressed me," wrote the Bishop, "as one who has grown strong and tender through great suffering, and as one, also, who would dare all things."

It was cool inside the dim church. The sun, tempered by the stained glass of the windows, threw shafts of crimson and green and gold upon the altar, where the candles burned palely. The men sat stiffly erect in their starched linen, while the women fluttered into their respective pews, clad in crisp muslins, where they whispered decorously among themselves about this foreigner who had been thrust upon them.

"As if they wasn't jist a plenty Americans smart enough and good enough, too," sniffed Mrs. Mobley, as she flounced into her corner.

Truly, the new rector was going to have need of all his high courage that morning. Every eye was on the vestry-room door when the organ pealed forth the voluntary. It swung open, and a tall, surpliced figure entered and knelt at the altar full in the golden light from the stained window. For a longer time than is usual he remained kneeling; then he rose and came forward with a masterful ease and grace.

The face that confronted a cold and curious gaze was clear-cut and classical in contour, but thin and worn. The eyes were dark and brilliant. They compelled attention, even while they appealed.

When he opened his lips to speak, a tremor shook him from head to foot, as at a cold and sudden blast; his face turned a shade paler, while his eyes swept the upturned faces as though seeking one soul that could answer his. He mastered himself so quickly that no one noticed the agitation, and began the service in a voice both musical and impressive. It seemed to soothe the uncertain temper of the members, who sank back into their pews with happier faces to listen to his sermon.

He used no notes, but spoke with remarkable fluency and fervor. It was evident to those who could understand that this was no ordinary man who had come among them, and while they could but poorly grasp his flights of thought, they were swept along by his eloquence and magnetic force.

He no longer looked into their faces, but over their heads, as at some mysterious presence; and he seemed to be pleading with the Divine Spirit, as if he would wrest therefrom by the very power of his eloquence and great need, a blessing on his new field of work, and an upholding strength to one so weak and so unworthy to labor in His vineyard.

He pictured Christ as a man, walking among them, knowing their temptations, as He, Himself, had been tempted; their human weaknesses and bitter struggles; pitying and forgiving, standing with supplicating arms uplifted between them and the just wrath of his Father. It was the real, living, suffering Christ, and not some far-removed, unapproachable and mysterious divinity and worker of miracles.

A woman somewhere in the congregation caught her breath with a sob, and the barrier between the man and his followers was swept aside. It went down as history in the records of Christ Church.

They went forward in a body to meet him at the conclusion of the services, and as he grasped each hand with silent pressure or with some low, pleasant word of greeting, his beautiful worn face was radiant with a transient joy that uplifted him. When all had gone but the vestrymen, there was an embarrassed silence, each glancing at the other, and then at the rector, who waited quietly for them to speak.

Finally, Banker McLendon took the bull by the horns:

"We regret, Mr. Somerville, that we are not able to offer you a salary commensurate — er — with your abilities. But our church is small and poor; it is — er — badly disorganized, I might say, on account of various obstacles and difficulties. It will strain us, under the present conditions, to even pay — "

He paused and looked at the tall and princely form, and out of very shame at the beggarly allowance mentally added two hundred out of his own pocket.

"As I said, it will strain us to pay even eight hundred dollars a year."

The other vestrymen looked at him in consternation, and then at each other.

"As for a home," the banker went on, as if eight hundred a year was a matter of no moment to Christ Church, "our rectory has — er — been burned, and there is no available house except a very small cottage on the outskirts of town; it is really, you might say," he coughed apologetically, "in the edge of the woods.

"Heretofore, our rectors have not been satisfied. *We* are not satisfied, but it is the best we can do."

He looked anxiously at the new rector, inwardly convinced that he had been shown by the Bishop into the wrong pew.

"I can assure you, gentlemen, from my heart, that the salary is quite sufficient for my needs, and also," with a brilliant smile, "that you could not have chosen better for me than this cottage 'in the edge of the woods.' I thank you for your kindly consideration toward one so wholly unknown to you," he replied with gentle courtesy.

The ordeal of the day was over. The rector passed into the vestry-room and closed the door. If any could have seen him then, shut in from the world, they would have marvelled much, he knelt so long with his face buried in his outstretched arms, though none could have guessed that he suffered had they not seen that the nails buried in the clenched hands had drawn blood.

. . . . . .

The parched and endless summer dragged slowly along, the people of St. Martinsville enduring it as best they might. Little relief was to be found, only in the early morning hours, when for a brief space before the sun came up it seemed like paradise.

The heavy dew lay on every leaf and flower; it flashed from the heart of the most gorgeous and beautiful morning glories that ever opened, and made sweeter, in some way that it has, the breath of the intoxicating French honeysuckle that clambered riotously everywhere.

Rev. Paul Somerville, in his little cottage in the edge of the woods, was up every morning before cock-crow, revelling in the sweet, old-fashioned garden that shut him in from the world, digging, pruning, training, bringing order out of chaos, until the fame of his roses had reached the great city lying like a jewel in the Gulf's embrace. He worked with a kind of frenzy that seemed to be a relief to him. Sometimes the sweet kiss of a rose against his cheek, as he passed among them in the dewy stillness of early dawn, brought a smile to his lips that seldom unbent their sad lines.

Never before had he dreamed of such roses as these of south Louisiana; the great creamy Maréchal Niels, the deep pink La France, the Fortune's Yellow, like a shower of gold, and the perfect purity of the exquisite Bride's roses, all "a-blowing and a-growing," as if the sunshine was made alone for them, and there was no such thing as bitterness, disgrace and remorse to shadow the lives of any living thing created of God.

Again, in the silence of utter loneliness, all this alluring beauty was nothing to him, and he would lift up his arms in supplication while his lips were dumb. There were times when he dared not even pray.

The attitude of Christ Church toward its rector was entirely changed. No voice had been lifted against him; nothing in his daily walk could be found to cavil at. They had gone to the other extreme and begun to deify him; listening with reverence not unmixed with awe to his impassioned sermons, that seemed to spring straight from his heart to his lips. Other pastors preached to empty benches while Christ Church was packed; Jew, Catholic and Gentile, saints and sinners, they filled his pews Sunday after Sunday, and neither bitterness nor jealousy grew out of it. It was, indeed, a thanksgiving time in the history of Christ Church.

Never seen in high places, whose doors stood wide for him, he was content if he could help the helpless or minister to the poor,

the ill, the dying. And he came as a Godsend to these this summer, when so many were stricken with a sickness called slow fever. It is a low malarial type peculiar to Louisiana, and is the most wearing and tedious of all known fevers, sapping the vitality slowly but surely. The doctor can do but little — the nurse everything. Sometimes several members of a family are down at a time, those who are left being taxed almost beyond endurance.

The unprecedented heat of the long summer had done its work. Among the poorer classes, the fever seemed more prevalent. Amidst these he went, giving himself little rest. They alone knew the sweetness of his smile, the tenderness of the strong white hands that ministered to their comfort. He furnished ice to assuage the tortures of thirst; he left everywhere, to cheer the weary eye, a cluster of roses from his garden; and when he knelt beside their beds to beg God to give them surcease from pain, it seemed that Heaven was not so very far away.

All this was known to the Bishop, and it warmed his heart toward the man who had so strangely interested him, and smoothed out a wrinkle cut in his lofty brow by years of wrestling with the problem of the church at St. Martinsville. Many warm words of praise and gratitude found their way from his pen to the young priest, and while they fell like balm on his lonely heart, yet they cut like a two-edged sword.

Letters postmarked London, written in a feminine hand, also came to him, and gave rise to no little speculation on the part of the postmaster, who scented a romance. "Miss Alexia Somerville" might be a sister, but more likely a far-removed cousin. Weekly a letter addressed to her in the rector's bold, clear handwriting also passed through his hands. He took to watching the rector's face when the answers came, for some sign that would help him out, but it seemed to the postmaster that the eyes only grew sadder, and that there was a droop in the tall figure as he buttoned the letter inside his coat, and turned away.

September came and passed and with it no abatement of the heat, and no falling off in the number of cases of fever. The rector grew thin and worn, there were hollows about the temples, but the eyes burned with as steady a fire, the hands were as strong and willing as though he were not failing somewhat under the

ordeal. Many begged him to rest lest the fever should find him, also, a ready prey.

He would only put the kindly warning by, protesting that he had never been ill in his life.

In November the Bishop was to come. There would be a large confirmation class ready for him. He had already written, declining the invitation of Banker McLendon to be his guest, signifying that he would stop at the rector's cottage.

The best room in the house was made ready for him. The ladies of the guild hastened there in a body with rugs, curtains, easy chairs and pretty bits of fancy work, transforming the bare room into one that would be, in a measure, acceptable to so high a personage. But nothing they could do seemed to tone in with the riotous beauty of rose and honeysuckle in the garden without, and they wondered by what magic the place, which had long run to waste, could have been brought to such speedy perfection.

As they went about their task, many were the furtive and curious glances cast into the rector's room, which stood open. It revealed nothing but a bare floor, an iron cot, a desk whereon stood the photograph of a woman, whether young or old none could tell, for none dared enter. Still they wondered about the picture. Being women, they could not help but wonder.

. . . . . .

With the advent of November, the backbone of summer was broken by a prolonged and much-needed rain, under whose beneficence the fever seemed to loose its hold, and all nature to spring into fresh and vigorous life. The birds in the speckled red, green and gold of the trees in the rector's garden sang a jubilate, the roses lifted their sweet lips, seeming to leap into more ravishing bloom, while the chrysanthemums bobbed their gorgeous shaggy heads as the wind and rain buffeted them about.

The Bishop was already on his way to St. Martinsville; at six o'clock the rector was to meet him. He had made a careful toilet, even to pinning a rosebud in his button-hole. In the little room where he dined, the table was set with beautiful napery, in the centre of which a great bowl of his finest roses was placed. His servant had prepared the best in the larder, and everything was in readiness. He felt strangely tired and cold; the change in the

weather seemed to chill him. Reaching for his hat, his coat brushed the photograph from his desk. He picked it up, gazed long into the beautiful eyes that looked so fearlessly into his, at the exquisite girlish face, with mischief in the dimples and innocent coquetry in the poise of the head turned toward him over the bare shoulder.

"Beloved," he whispered, "good-by for all time. Christ, I beseech thee — pity and forgiveness."

He crushed the picture against his lips, replaced it tenderly, and drew from his pocket her last letter, written a month ago.

> YOU DEAREST AND BEST OF BROTHERS: — How I wish I could see and thank you for all your goodness to me. No other girl in college is so well provided for and indulged as your Kitten. Do they, indeed, pay such princely salaries back there in free America, or do you starve yourself that I may fatten? My every wish but one is gratified. Can you guess the only one denied me? It is to be with you, since I have none but you. I sometimes dream of slipping away from this tiresome grind some fine day, and setting sail for a certain little spot in America called Louisiana — I can hardly find it on the map — to be housekeeper and waiting-maid to the very best brother a girl ever had. It cries out to me, this little corner in far away America — I can see the morning glories, and can smell the "scent of the jasmine flower." And the roses you tell me of — dearest and only brother, think of me back here in the fog, groping after the sunshine in which you are revelling. There is the bell — so it is good-by. I may not write again for a month as I am so crowded with my college work.
>
> Your little sister,
> ALEXIA.

He locked the letter in his desk, took down his hat, and set out for the station, where the train was about due. He walked rapidly, his head down, seeking to shape into words a story that he had to tell before he slept. Let come what may, the confession should be made. That, indeed, would be the easier part of the task he had set himself. The other was not clear, but he would meet it; he would stand once again an honest man in his own eyes, if he were hounded to the uttermost end of the earth for the telling.

A tall, distinguished-looking man, just stepping from the sleeper, as he reached the station, recognized him instantly and came toward him with outstretched hand and unmistakable pleasure in his eyes. It sent an electric shock of gladness through the younger man that brought the sharp sting of tears to his eyes. He had been so lonely, so miserable, it seemed such a long and

weary while since he had stood eye to eye with one who moved in the high places where he himself once walked. He opened his lips to speak some word of welcome, but the world seemed to wheel suddenly around, and he almost lost himself. As he came back to himself, the Bishop, looking at him with concern, said:

"My dear Somerville, you are not well. I fear this summer has been too much for you."

"Indeed, Bishop, I have stood it famously. I can but admit, however, that St. Martinsville has given me a rather warm reception."

The Bishop smiled and turned to greet the banker and other prominent churchmen who had come to welcome him.

As he stood a little apart waiting for him, a slender, girlish figure passed him, and stopped to speak in a low tone to a cabman. As she entered and drove off, he had a strange sensation pass over him. In the waning light he had caught the flash of a pair of beautiful eyes, and the twinkle of a dimple as she smiled at the cabman. It must have been the trick of his disordered brain, but the vision would not leave him.

It was twilight when they at last set out for the rectory, the Bishop refusing to ride, saying that he wished to stretch his legs, and it was fully an hour after the arrival of the train before they reached the gate of the rose garden. The Bishop sniffed the fragrance of the balmy air, looking about him with keen appreciation of the beauty of the scene in the clear, translucent twilight.

"It is said in the city that your roses surpass ours, which is saying much. How have you conjured them like this?"

"I found them here when I came," the rector responded, "and I have only given them a little care and coaxing. In England we do not find the work so easy. Did I say 'work'?"

He paused, and his eyes dwelt fondly on the scene before him. "I did not use the right word. It has been my deepest pleasure — my solace — in lonely moments; it has helped me to live."

Suddenly he lifted his head in a startled way, and his eyes dwelt on the lighted windows of the Bishop's room, where a woman's figure appeared. She swept aside the lace curtains which had been so carefully draped for the Bishop's coming, and her eyes fell on the tall figure in the gate. With a little ecstatic cry her flying feet carried her down the walk toward them, calling as she ran:

"It is only I, your Kitten — don't be frightened, Paul!"

She dashed the gate open in a moment and had hurled herself into his arms, without heeding the Bishop, who was hidden by the honeysuckle that shrouded the fence. As she lifted her face for his kiss, a sudden chill seemed to seize her, and looking more closely into the white, startled face, she fell back with a little cry of fright and shame.

"Oh, I beg your pardon; I thought you were my brother, Paul Somerville — where is he? What strange mistake have I made? I —"

The Bishop looked from one to the other in profound astonishment. Suddenly he put out his arm with a quick motion and braced the swaying form of the young rector.

He turned to the startled girl with a gesture of command:

"Pray help me to the house with him. Catch his arm before he gives out entirely. We *must* get him to the house. I am Bishop Neville."

Just how they got him into the house and on to the Bishop's bed, Paul never remembered. The peace of perfect oblivion was granted him for awhile.

When he opened his eyes at last it was in response to the touch on his brow of a cool, soft hand, wet with something that brought to his memory the scent of the purple lilacs just bursting into their second blooming in his garden. He looked up into a pair of eyes, the same beautiful, steadfast eyes of those in the picture on his desk. Whatever it was in the deep brilliancy of those which held hers, it brought a delicious pink into the rounded cheeks, and she fell back with a motion to the Bishop, who quickly held a glass of wine to the pale lips.

"Drink it; you will soon be better," he bade him with calm authority. "I was afraid when I saw you that you had done yourself a mischief. You can't hold up under these summers as you can in those of England."

The rector moved his languid head uneasily; his lips were blue and his face pale and drawn.

"Close the windows," he murmured, "it is so — deathly — cold."

The girl quickly closed the shutters, and as the servant entered

with a light, asked her to bring blankets. They tucked them around him, and gave him more wine, the Bishop directing as one who understood, and the girl willing and eager if only there were something she could do.

Then he fell asleep for an hour, the fever mounting rapidly. It throbbed in his temples and hung two scarlet signals on his cheeks. He awoke at length with a start, and looked about him with wild and troubled eyes, brilliant with the fire of fever.

He glanced from the anxious face of the Bishop to the slender figure waiting silently at the foot of his bed. In some intuitive way he understood that the Bishop knew nothing more than he guessed before he slept. The knowledge armed him with factitious strength. He threw the blankets from him and sat up. The Bishop laid a restraining hand on his arm.

"You must be quiet, Somerville. It is imperative. You are ill."

"I know, Bishop, I am ill. I feel that I am going to be desperately so very soon. I have something I must tell you before my mind wanders. You must not try to stop me. I was going to make my confession to you to-night. I will make it if God lend me sufficient strength. Listen. I am not Paul Somerville, but Paul Fairfax. This is not my sister. I am an impostor."

The girl leaned toward him, breathlessly; her eyes were wide and wondering.

The Bishop instinctively drew back, even while his eyes questioned the sanity of the man.

The rector noticed the movement, and read the questioning eyes regarding him.

"It is not a pretty story for any man to confess," he said bitterly, "but it was the inspiration of desperation. I have no hope that either of you two, brought together so strangely, can condone it. I tell it because, as a man who has no longer strength to bear the burden, I must.

"I had just been graduated from an ecclesiastical college, full of splendid hopes and ambitions. I came of a family that stood high, but there was a wild strain in the blood, a thirst for gaming, that had been the undoing of more than one Fairfax.

"One who was very near and dear to me, for all his wildness — I shall not name him, you must pardon me that, at least — had lost

heavily at the gaming table. In a moment of madness and desperation, he — "

He stopped and put his hand to his throat as if choking; the beat of the fever was hammering in his temples, and at the look of physical and mental anguish in his eyes, the girl caught her breath with a sob, and the Bishop raised his hand as if he must be stopped at all costs.

"My brain is very clear," he continued, though his voice was strained and unnatural. "I was saying that one who must be nameless, in a momentary madness had obtained money by forging a check. I was arrested, convicted and sentenced to ten years in prison. The guilty one shot himself one night during the trial. It was generally believed that he did it on account of the disgrace of his so — on account of the disgrace of a member of his family." He caught himself with frantic haste, but too late. With a look of horror and infinite compassion, the Bishop laid his hand on the shoulder of the sick man. But he shrank away from it.

"Wait," he said; "hear it all. I spent two years in prison. The horror of it follows me everywhere! But one night, by some strange fatality, I escaped. Could you blame me for walking free when it seemed a deliverance sent perhaps by God himself?

"I made my way to my home in safety, slipped into my room under cover of darkness. I changed my clothes, and threw a few things into my travelling bag. My unspent allowance lay untouched in my drawer. I also found a wig among my college belongings.

"I left the house unseen, made my way to the dock, where a vessel was about to set sail for America. I took passage under an assumed name, and as we steamed out of the harbor, hidden from sight I knelt down and thanked God, laughing and weeping with hysterical joy, dedicating my whole future to his service.

"When I went forward to the rail I noticed a tall, slender man of my height and not unlike me. He was dressed in clerical black and was waving farewell to a young woman on the dock. I afterward learned it was his sister." He turned his burning eyes toward the girl who stood watching him like one who could scarcely contain herself.

"Still struggling in the web of fate, the young clergyman and

I met, became strangely drawn one to the other, and, I may say, friends. He talked freely to me, full of hope and ambitions for himself and sister, who was entirely dependent upon him. He showed me her picture and his credentials and letters of introduction to the Bishop of the Louisiana diocese. In return I confided all my miserable story to him. The confidence only bound us more closely. We shared the same stateroom, and one night he called me to his berth with a sharp, agonized cry. He was gasping for breath when I reached him, and speechless with pain, with one hand clutching convulsively at his heart. He died before I could summon aid."

He stopped as the girl's low, pitiful sobbing smote his ear.

"I knew he had trouble with his heart; the doctors thought the change might prolong his life. Dear, dear Paul — to die away from me — among strangers," she cried brokenly.

The rector fell back among the pillows, where he lay silent for a time, nerving himself for what must follow. He was almost spent, but by a herculean effort, raising himself to his elbow, he continued:

"What demon got possession of me, I know not, but suddenly as I sat by his still form, it came upon me like a flash of lightning: 'The way is open to you. If you will, you may go forth a man, free from the stigma of disgrace.' By transferring his papers to my own pocket, I could henceforth be known as Rev. Paul Somerville, and he be consigned to the waves that tell no secrets.

"We had made no acquaintances on board; we were much alike and both dressed as clergymen. The next day he was buried at sea under my assumed name, and I, as Paul Somerville, walked safe and free. Bishop, you know the rest. Pray God to have mercy on my soul."

He lay quiet for a time and then his mind began to wander, as the fever crept higher and higher.

"The way is so long — I am tired. But the roses, Alexia, beloved — "

He started, as if he knew he had spoken amiss. He opened his eyes and with a great effort raised himself to look into the sad face that was turned toward him.

"That I have hurt you, Miss Somerville, is the bitterest pang

of all. But I had meant to confess all — I never dreamed it would come to this pass. It is beyond pardon — beyond pardon."

His eyes no longer recognized them when they tried to rouse him.

The Bishop arose and with a deep sigh stood for a moment looking down on the fine, careworn face, chiselled so perfectly, and bearing the stamp of nobility and high breeding.

"I am going for a physician and nurse, Miss Somerville," he said, taking his hat. "I will send the servant to assist you. Keep his head and hands sponged with water as cold as you can secure it until I return."

The girl took a quick step toward him.

"I will gladly do everything in my power. I am a good nurse. Do you think there is danger?"

"I think," he answered, "that there is very grave danger in his condition. I will return immediately."

When he arrived with the doctor, he found her bending over the still unconscious patient, and when she lifted her head, the beautiful eyes were heavy with tears.

The doctor prescribed in silence. When he rose to leave he called the Bishop aside.

"It will all depend on the nursing. He has scarcely a chance. I think the young lady will do better than any you can secure. But I will send you a woman, one of the best in the parish, though needy — one whose life he saved by care and attention this summer. She will be glad to come and assist the young lady."

"We will be indebted, Doctor. Send her at once. I shall remain until the danger is past."

For three weeks they almost despaired. He knew no one, and his strength ebbed rapidly.

Alexia never left him except to snatch an occasional hour's sleep. His restlessness increased when she quit the room. Sometimes he would sleep for a brief time, while she held the thin, burning hand, or smoothed the hot brow.

They fought a hard fight, the doctor, the Bishop, Alexia and the woman whose gratitude to the one who had not spared himself when she lay like that rendered her untiring in his service. They fought and won.

The day he regained consciousness the Bishop entered the room

unexpectedly, but he paused, with his hat lifted, in the door, his eyes moist and tender as they fell on the kneeling figure of the girl by the bedside. The weak, thin hand rested on the ruddy curls nestling close to his face. She sobbed convulsively.

"You could not — I dare not — beloved — believe it — love a man who has sinned — "

She placed her hand over his lips, crying passionately:

"But I do — I do! I have loved you since the moment I looked into your eyes. I have no one, no one but you. God himself has spared you — to me."

The Bishop passed slowly down the walk to the carriage waiting to convey him to the depot; his face wore an expression both soft and serene. He paused at the gate to break a fragrant bunch of lilac that comes like a breath of spring just before the killing frost of winter in Louisiana.

As he stuck it in his button-hole, he heard the quick, light step of the English girl behind him. He turned and smiled quizzically into the radiant face.

"Yes, I know what you would say. You wish me to return by the first of December — he will then be able to travel. It is quite possible that you will both have need of me — then?"

The girl flushed crimson, and hung back.

"There is a fine opening for a young clergyman of ability in British Honduras. The change would be of wonderful benefit to him, and put him quickly into fine condition — that and the care of the best nurse and the finest young woman it has yet been my pleasure to meet."

He lifted his hat and stood smiling down into the eyes into which had sprung a tearful radiance.

She caught the outstretched hand and kissed it softly.

"Next to him, I love you," she whispered fervently. "God will reward you for the noblest act ever done by man or Bishop."

The Ticklemore Boom.*

BY F. E. CHASE.

"IT is a very simple matter," said the Furniture Dealer. "We will send you every day a new library chair. You agree to sit in these chairs during your working hours, and to supply us with a memorandum of the particular work done during such occupancy."

"Yes," said the Eminent Author; "that is very easy."

"For this service," pursued the man of business, "we agree to pay five dollars per chair — or roughly, allowing for Sundays, holidays and days when you are incapacitated by illness, fifteen hundred dollars a year. It is an easy job. All you have to do is sit down and take your money."

"True," said the Author. "But so pre-eminently sedentary an employment might react upon my health."

"That is the chance you take," replied the financial genius briskly. "Of course, if you prefer, you might impress your personality upon only one chair per annum, for which we might get, through the value of such unique association, a very large price indeed; but this is highly speculative, since such customers, combining the most ardent spirit of the collector with the amplest financial resources, are rare indeed. Something of the conservative nature of a steady job struck me as being better all around."

"I see the idea," replied Ticklemore. "But should not the chair in which I begin or end a notable work be worth, perhaps, double price to you? I do not wish to seem grasping, but the dignity of my calling enforces certain obligations upon me."

"That may be," said the Dealer, "but at the present experimental stage of the business we cannot safely figure upon these niceties."

* Copyright, 1903, by The Shortstory Publishing Company. All rights reserved.

* The writer of this story was awarded the $100 Oliver Typewriter Prize in THE BLACK CAT story contest ending February 26, 1902.

"I see," said the Author. "These are matters for future consideration."

"Yes," replied the other, producing a contract in duplicate. "Kindly sign these, and we are off upon our trial heat."

The great Ticklemore flushed slightly, and did not take the proffered pen.

"Is a contract necessary?" he said at length. "I confess to a certain disinclination to sign my name."

"Absolutely," said the Furniture Dealer decisively.

"In that case," replied Ticklemore firmly, albeit with embarrassment, "we need talk no further. I thank you for your liberality, and bid you good day."

With these words he walked briskly out, and left the Furniture Dealer staring.

. . . . . .

Thomas Ticklemore, whose conduct upon the above occasion calls for some explanation, will hardly be remembered by the present generation of readers of fiction, though his vogue some ten years ago was as great as it proved ephemeral.

He had served the usual weary apprenticeship to letters, during which his only extravagance was postage stamps, and his superlative luxury three meals a day, when the publication of his striking tale, "King Subterfuge, the Subtle," first brought him into prominence. At the very threshold of fame he encountered the autograph collector. His greatly augmented mail now brought him fresh commissions, fat checks and flattering words of praise and encouragement, but also, in the proportion of twenty to one, requests for his autograph from that incomprehensible class that attaches a value to this simple product of the writer's art.

Had his success been less sudden, and the resulting demand for the more legitimate product of his pen been less overwhelming, a pardonable vanity might have induced him to yield to these requests; but as it was, he took the advice of his friend Coolpitcher, the comedian.

"Never, dear boy," said that veteran in popularity, "on your blessed life. Ignore 'em. Don't make yourself too cheap."

In this counsel Coolpitcher was entirely consistent with his own practice; for though he had never been niggardly of his autograph,

and had, indeed, given it freely during a long and checkered public career, chiefly in the form of I.O.U's, he had never made it at all cheap to its recipients. Ticklemore adopted it forthwith, employing the requests which continued to crowd his letter box as pipe lights, and utilizing the return postage stamps they occasionally contained for the forwarding of manuscript to his publishers.

It was not long before it got abroad that the distinguished Mr. Ticklemore had never given his autograph to any one, even going to the length of signing private notes with a rubber stamp, and of making verbal contracts only, to the jeopardy of his pecuniary interests. This singular fact, circulated widely in the newspapers by his astute publishers as a literary note, stimulated his admirers to redoubled energy in the pursuit of so unique a possession. But at such naïve contrivances as registered letters or presents of fruit, game or cigars, the cunning Ticklemore merely laughed, the not wholly disinterested hand of Coolpitcher coming readily to his aid.

Two desperate characters lay in wait for him one dark night, and having captured a neighbor who bore a strong personal resemblance to the hero of the hour, easily persuaded him at the pistol's mouth to write a number of copies of Ticklemore's name, which they succeeded in selling at a large figure before their victim had time to tell his story.

The Post-Office Department was forced to prosecute a fraudulent genius who advertised to send early copies of Ticklemore's signature cut from old manuscript, and who really sent, with some confusion of idea, sheets of manuscript from which a signature had been cut; and more than one hotel man privily wrote the distinguished name in an old register, and then employed some disinterested person to discover it.

The leading newspapers all published facsimiles of this rare autograph, in every style of handwriting, and a well-known pedagogue, who had aided in forming the mind and hand of the infant Ticklemore, came out in a long letter identifying the worst of these as genuine, by an expert comparison with a page of juvenile pot-hooks.

The few genuine autographs that had survived from earlier years had been long ago absorbed by collectors, and the situation

thus created was of inestimable value, for advertising purposes, to the author's delighted publishers.

That Coolpitcher's advice was likely to be a source of direct profit to the author himself never occurred to either of them; nor was it so at first, save in the small economy in postage stamps that it occasioned, until the growth of Ticklemore's income necessitated the opening of a bank account. This expedient was agreeably forced upon him in a very few months after the publication of "King Subterfuge, the Subtle," which ran nimbly into edition after edition.

Upon the evening of the day on which Mr. Ticklemore made his first deposit, there appeared in a leading daily paper that had published a standing offer of $500 for a genuine, authenticated autograph, a photo-engraved fac-simile of his signature, and an announcement that the original could be seen at the *Paragon* office. There, behind a strong plate glass, and jealously guarded by a husky policeman, Ticklemore beheld the signature he had furnished the bank for comparison. Later he received a note of apology from the President saying that, while he was the last man to accuse a brother official of underhanded conduct, simple justice to himself demanded the statement that, for his part, he was incapable of converting a public trust to private ends, while the Cashier, whom he met that evening in society, said with some bitterness that it was a hard position for an upright man to be mixed up with people whose moral sense was a minus quantity. From which Ticklemore inferred that they had divided the spoils.

At the month's end, when he called for his book, which had been sent in to be balanced, the young man who handed it to him said:

"You need not have troubled to bring in your book, Mr. Ticklemore, since I see you have no checks out."

"Ah, but I have," he replied, "lots of them." And indeed, charmed by the novelty of the thing, he had written an unnecessarily large number, in payment of divers small bills. None of these had been presented for payment.

He could not account for this, and when at the end of the second month he again received back his book without a single debit item, he was not only puzzled but vaguely alarmed.

He did not seek Coolpitcher's advice, however, in this matter.

Coolpitcher's pronounced talent for supplying debit items seemed to him perilous at such a crisis, so he kept the matter quite to himself.

In a few days the explanation arrived in an accidental way. A struggling literary friend said to him:

"I see you have set up a bank account, old man."

"Why, yes," replied Ticklemore, guardedly, scenting a touch, "in a small way — in a very small way. How did you know?"

"Oh, I saw one of your checks in a man's autograph album. It was for eleven dollars. He wanted it bad, seems to me."

Ticklemore remembered the check. It had been given for a box of cigars. Eleven dollars did seem a large price to pay for an autograph, even for that of a writer of his unexampled popularity, but here was the fact — a man had paid, in effect, this precise sum for one.

The author's inflammable imagination blazed up at this spark into a vivid flash of generalization. This unprecedented circumstance promptly translated itself into boundless wealth. His daily expenses, if paid by checks not too large in individual amount, would be eagerly provided for by his admirers, while his income remained intact. It was a fortunate condition of things beside which the resources of Monte Cristo became insignificant.

He applied his nimble pen to this new task with zeal. He worked half the day only upon his new novel, and devoted the remainder to the cogenial labor of writing checks, equally imaginative in point of value, that were never to be paid. In a short time his second book duly appeared, and its popularity exceeded, if possible, that of his first. Thus encouraged, Ticklemore employed an attractive young woman as an assistant to do the drudgery of filling in the amounts and other details of the checks, and saved his own strength for the labor of signing them, thus doubling his daily output. He had a specially engraved and highly ornamental check, less commercial in appearance and better suited for the purely decorative uses of autograph albums, made for him in books of six hundred each, and filled his library shelves with them. It was no mere figure of speech when he described his books as his treasures.

His wholly unimpaired capital he invested in real estate in choice

localities and in good bonds, displaying considerable shrewdness in both lines of investment. But he did not permit the cares of business to interfere with the remunerative labor of writing checks. His literary labors suffered somewhat from these encroachments, but still he contrived, with the invaluable aid of his pretty amanuensis, to get out his third novel by the end of the second year. Upon the day that it was finished, after signing the usual batch of checks made ready for him by her careful hand, he signed an additional one in blank — a most unwise thing to do — requesting her to make it out for a specified sum to her own order.

"Pray accept this, my dear," said he with an engaging smile, "as a slight testimonial of my regard and appreciation."

It may have been due to the fact that two very striking books by other authors appeared at about the same time, or there may really have been, as the critical press insisted, a falling off in his work from the old standard which had made him famous; but it is certain that his third novel fell rather flat, barely reaching a second edition in the first year. This, however, he accepted philosophically, saying, "Better luck next time," and went on writing checks with the same reckless hand.

One day, to his great surprise, he received a polite notice from the bank calling his attention to an overdraft which he was requested to make good. He went down to see about it, and found that six or eight hundred of his recent checks had been unprecedentedly presented for payment, quite exhausting the comfortable balance which he had left after his last purchase of bonds. This disconcerted him a little, but he sold a few securities and made the loss good. At the end of the month the balance which he had thus restored was again exhausted by an influx of checks which made a package so large that they had to be returned to him by express.

On looking them over the same evening he discovered with dismay that among those of recent date were a good many earlier ones which bore upon their backs stains of the mucilage by means of which they had been attached to the pages of autograph albums. Still he did not grasp the full consequences of his fall from popularity, but met what he regarded as a temporary reverse with the nonchalance of a man of large resources.

He began to notice, however, a change in the manner of the people at the bank which disconcerted him, and the notices of overdrafts became at the same time more frequent and more peremptory. In response to these he sold by degrees all his securities and finally his real estate and personal belongings, but still the flood of checks returned upon and absorbed the proceeds of his sales.

The crisis came quickly. In answer to an urgent demand for funds, he had sold his last remaining assets to the amount of some eighty-nine thousand dollars, and had entrusted this sum to his typewriter to deposit it. She had hardly time to reach the bank when the cashier telephoned for more money.

"But I have just paid in nearly ninety thousand dollars," gasped Ticklemore.

"All checked out," came over the unsympathetic 'phone.

Ticklemore fell back stunned in his office chair, where his typewriter found him ten minutes later.

"Well, Mary," he said feebly, "it's all up."

"Not on your life," said Mary, who, though gifted in a practical way, still lacked the higher culture.

"Eh!" said Ticklemore, sitting up. "Was it a false report, then?"

"No," she replied. "*You're* broke, right enough; but after I had banked that ninety thou., I filled out that blank check you give me, an' put it in at the other window. So I'm it."

Ticklemore gazed upon her with admiration.

"Mary, will you marry me?" said he.

"In a minute!" she replied.

A Mountain Quail.*

BY M. J. ENRIGHT.

CLAY BERKLEY, ex-captain in the Confederate Army, was the keeper of a toll-gate which obstructed free travel on the Jimtown turnpike, located in southeastern Kentucky. A large majority of the high-spirited travellers on this no-thoroughfare regarded the toll-gate as a Texas longhorn does the fence of a corral — something to be broken down or jumped over. In an effort to perform this latter feat, mounted on a spirited mare, Curt Beale, leader of a highland clan, called in the terse dialect of the district "The Beales," met with an accident. Captain Berkley, in fair performance of his duty, raised the toll-gate bar just as the mare, in performance of her duty, attempted to jump over it. The result was a crash, and horse and man, and — what was more momentous — the man's Winchester, came to the ground. When the rifle struck the macadam, an explosion which followed brought about a change in the leadership of the Beale clan, and Curt's mantle fell on the shoulders of another monosyllabic Beale, his brother Hank. One of the most pressing duties of the new leader, in accordance with the unvaried custom of the neighborhood, was a proper sacrifice to the shade of his predecessor, and the toll-gate keeper was, naturally, selected as the victim. The new chieftain and his lieutenant, Bud Harkins, had repaired to Jimtown, to make necessary preparation for the ceremony, this preparation consisting mainly of gathering a sufficient number of followers and enclosing a satisfactory quantity of "mountain dew."

This fact had come to the knowledge of Jack Gault, a mountaineer of a type different from that of the Beales and Harkinses, who was friendly to the toll-gate keeper, and not in sympathy with the pious and hereditary observances of the mountain clans, and he resolved to prevent, if possible, this particular sacrifice.

* Copyright, 1903, by The Shortstory Publishing Company. All rights reserved.

The most practical way to avert the danger was by summoning a sheriff's posse from Keyesville, the county seat, and, as the Beales were in an attitude of chronic hostility to the sheriff, that officer might be expected to do his duty, but it was also necessary to warn Captain Berkley. Gault, not having the ubiquity requisite for the performance of both errands in the given time, determined to warn the old soldier. He rode over to Kline's tavern, however, in the hope of finding some one who would go to Keyesville. He failed in this, as reverence for traditional custom and fear of the Beales were almost universal in that section.

Jack shook his horse's bridle and rode away. Before him stretched for miles, in dreary solitude, the white line of the Jimtown turnpike, broken, here and there, by some bald knob or jutting mass of rock. As the young mountaineer advanced, the road, winding ever upward over foothills of the Cumberland Range, became more steep and rugged, the scenery more monotonous and desolate. For the twelve miles which stretched between Kline's tavern and the toll-gate, there was no human habitation, and the locality had been the scene of many a deed of unpunished violence. He felt that the errand on which he was bent was a forlorn hope, so far as saving the old man's life was concerned. The death of their leader, which they laid at Captain Berkley's door, had infuriated the gang, and Gault knew that the old man was doomed more certainly, in that region, than if legal sentence of death had been passed upon him, but Jack was "Yorkshire, too," and a certain kind of rough chivalry, which seems to be inhaled with the ozone of great altitudes all over the world, had inspired him with the determination of giving, as he expressed it, "the old man a show for his white alley." When he reached the toll-gate, he rode directly to the stable and put up his horse. Captain Berkley, who had noticed his approach, and observed this proceeding with surprise, accosted him:

"Hello, Jack, going to stay with us to-night?"

"Yes, I shouldn't wonder if Hank Beale and some of the boys would be down from Jimtown to-night, and I thought I'd help you entertain them."

The Captain started and looked at him keenly for a moment, and then said, quietly:

"All right, you're welcome, Jack, come in."

Quail Berkley, a girl of fifteen, with a trim, graceful figure and a bright, earnest face, was preparing the evening meal. Observation of her quick, bird-like movements, her bright eyes, and a fashion she had of perking up her head and holding it sideways while she listened, justified the fitness and indicated the origin of her peculiar prenomen. She welcomed Jack shyly, and went about her work with a lighter step and brighter face. Insomuch as such a matter-of-fact little body could have a hero, Jack was her hero. Once she had tied up his arm with her handkerchief, when he was wounded, defending an illicit still against a posse of United States officers. The wound was only a scratch and Jack had almost forgotten the incident, but to Quail, who had witnessed the skirmish, it was the great adventure of her life, and Jack played the principal rôle.

After full justice had been done to Quail's batter bread and fried chicken, the men lounged out of the house and leaned against the toll-gate bar. Jack was the first to speak:

"Quail keeps house for you now, does she?"

"Yes, ever since her mother died Quail has run the house, but I have got to thinking, lately, that it's an awful lonesome place for her. We never see anybody but the boys from Jimtown or the teamsters and now and then a revenue officer; no chance of any schoolin'." And he added, with a sigh, "I reckon we've got to move away."

This was the opening Jack was looking for. Immediate flight he felt was Berkley's only chance, but it was a matter of stubborn pride with all the old dwellers in that region not to permit themselves to be driven out by the prevailing lawlessness. No matter what the danger, they would rather face it than submit to the stigma of being "run out of the county." So Jack had hesitated about proposing flight until the Captain's words furnished an opportunity, and he chimed in eagerly, "That's so, Cap. This ain't no place to bring up a girl like Quail, with no mother to look after her, and no chance to larn anything. If I was you I wouldn't stay here a minnit." Then with a glance at the house, "You ain't got much truck in there, have you?"

"No," the Captain said, slowly, "the Turnpike Company fur-

nishes the house. I can cart away everything we have in one load."

"Then why in thunder don't you do it to-night? You know what devils them fellows are. They'll go to Jimtown and fill up with whiskey, and will be down here before morning. They pretend to think you killed Curt Beale on purpose. You know what that means."

The old man's face flushed. "If it wasn't for the girl," he said, "there ain't outlaws enough between here and Cumberland Gap to run me out, but I reckon you're right, Jack; it ain't the place for her. Don't say nothing to Quail about this. I'll take her over to my brother's at Bowling Green."

"Let us go in and pack up at once, then," said Gault.

"I can't go to-night, Jack. I've got to notify the company first — it would look too much like desertion to leave so sudden. They can probably get another man here by next Monday, and then I'll go."

"Next Monday!" Jack exclaimed. "Don't be a fool, Captain. You know what will happen as well as I do if you stay here till Monday."

The Captain looked gratefully at Gault but made no answer, and the young man resumed, "Come, Berkley, be sensible. Let's get out to-night."

"No, Jack," he answered, "I can't run away like that, and say, Jack, you can't do no good staying here. You'll get the boys down on you. I'll go to the stable and fetch your horse." As he turned, Jack stepped in front of him with emphasis, and said:

"No, you don't. If you don't know enough to take care of yourself and little Quail, you need a guardyun, and I'm goin' to be guardyun — for to-night, anyhow."

Captain Berkley could hardly quarrel with this devotion, and it was arranged that he and Jack should take turns in keeping watch through the night. The precaution proved unnecessary, however. For some reason, connected, probably, with the supply of apple-jack at Jimtown, the lynching bee had been postponed. The men kept guard until the light of coming day began to creep over the distant mountain tops, then, after a hasty breakfast, Jack mounted his horse and started for Keyesville, saying as he rode

away, "They won't come now before to-night, and by that time we'll be ready for them."

Quail watched his departure from the doorway. No suspicion came to her of the purport of his coming or going, and when Pine Knob hid horse and rider from view she turned with an unconscious sigh to her morning tasks.

The morning was well advanced when Berkley, who had, all through the morning, moved about in a slow, uneasy way, like a grazing steer, called Quail to him and said, with unusual brusqueness — he was ordinarily very gentle with the motherless girl — "I wish you would take that parcel that Joe Britton left over to Conkey's to-day."

"Why, Dad," Quail exclaimed in surprise, "it's five miles up the mountain to Conkey's, and the teamster said there was no hurry, it could stay until Conkey called for it."

"I know it's a rough trip, Quail, and I wouldn't ask you to go, but I have a special reason for wanting to get that parcel to Conkey right away."

Quail did not relish the errand, but answered promptly, "Oh, I'll go then, Dad. I'd better start at once, so as to be back before dark."

The delivery of the parcel was of no importance, but the Captain did not agree with Jack in the belief that the visit of the Beale gang would be deferred until night — why wait for night on that lonely road — and when they came he wanted Quail safely out of the way. If it came to a battle, the girl would have been no mean ally, for she handled a rifle as deftly and fired with as true an aim as any outlaw on the mountain side, but her father could not bear the thought of her being present at the scene of violence and bloodshed that would ensue, should Beale and his companions make their appearance. He had fully determined neither to desert his post nor submit unresistingly to outrage, and if the girl knew he was in danger she could not be induced to quit his side.

Quail started on her long trip over the mountain with a cheerful "Good-bye, Dad," and he, standing at the toll-gate bar, sadly watched her retreating figure as she passed out of sight, half walking, half skipping, up the mountain path, her repeating rifle jaun-

tily slung over her shoulder. Then he turned to the house with the thought, "Poor little Quail, what will she do when I am gone?"

Then silence and loneliness settled on the mountain side, like the silence and solitude of a deserted shore, the never-ceasing voice of the pines like the murmur of lapping waves. The old soldier, seated on the shaded "stoop" in front of his little home, gave way to gloomy meditation. With chair tilted back against the weather-beaten clapboards, his Winchester within easy reach, he recalled adventures and escapes, in each of which there had been one chance for life and many for death, and he had, hitherto, always won the lucky throw. Now, all throws were in the black; a band of galloping horsemen flashing around a bend in the road, a few rifle shots, and all would be over. For himself he cared nothing — death was but the blowing out of a candle, a lying down to rest. He would like to stay a short time longer for Quail's sake, until she grew taller and stronger. Poor little Quail, who had been so much to him, and for whom he had been able to do so little! But it could not be helped; he must not leave his post. He did not dream of deserting it — he was bound by an idea, a sentiment, trivial and foolish did he but know it, but, with the light he had, as binding as faith or honor on other kinds of men.

He hardly noted the flight of the hours, and the shadows of the pines were making dark splotches on the white dust of the turnpike when he was aroused by the approach of a vehicle in which were seated a man and woman, apparently some mountain farmer and his wife, on their way to the valley. As he rose to open the gate, he noted the lengthening shadows, and the thought came to him, as a matter of surprise, that the day was nearly done, and then, sudden and luminous as a flash of lightning, came the corollary, it was almost time for Jack Gault to arrive with help from Keyesville. A thrill of hope shot through him. There was, perhaps, an off chance after all and he would be lucky once more. The reaction was so vigorous that he almost smiled at his late fears as he approached the wagon to collect toll.

With a sudden spring and a shout both occupants of the vehicle were upon him, he was borne to the ground, stunned and bewildered, and Bud Harkins, who had thrown off the shawl which

disguised him as a woman, gripped the old man by the throat. In response to the shout, the thunder of horses' hoofs was heard on the road above, and with characteristic yells the Beale gang surrounded their victim.

"Let us shoot him right here and be done with it," cried one rough voice.

"No," Hank Beale interposed, "I said that the man who killed my brother should hang for it. We'll take him to Burrell's Billet and string him up. You can shoot all you want to afterwards."

Burrell's Billet was a piece of level ground, about half an acre in extent, which indented the mountain side a short distance above the toll-gate. Years before, a man named Burrell had built a log shanty on this plateau, called it a tavern and named it Burrell's Billet. Burrell had disappeared, in consequence, it was said, of some slight disagreement with the Beales, and his billet seemed to be in a fair way to follow his example. The spot had long been used as a camping ground for hunters, who had consumed a considerable portion of the structure for their fires. Roof, doors, windows and a number of the side logs were gone, but enough of the building remained to keep in place a stout ridge-pole. The spot was surrounded by rocky masses, which extended from the road above to the road below and enclosed the little plateau like an amphitheatre.

Captain Berkley's hands were tied, and Harkins, fastening one end of a rope around the helpless man's body and the other to his saddle bow, brutally dragged him at his horse's heels, bruised and stunned, through the dust of the turnpike. When the ruffians reached the "Billet" the old man was unconscious, and, dismounting, they dragged him inside of Burrell's inclosure, and without delay or ceremony put a rope around his neck and threw the loose end over the ridge-pole. While the Captain's body lay prostrate, the rope was not quite long enough to be reached on the opposite side of the pole, and Bud Harkins stooped to raise the body, so as to bring the loose end within reach. As he raised himself, with the unconscious form in his arms, there came the sharp crack of a rifle, and both fell back to the ground in a motionless heap.

"Who fired that shot?" Beale shouted savagely.

"I did," came in clear, bell-like tones from the rocks above, and there stood Quail, the horizontal rays of the western sun bringing her figure into bold relief, a curl of smoke from her rifle floating, like an aureole, above her head. "I did, and if one of you moves I will fire again. I have six shots left in my rifle, one for each of you, and you know I can shoot. Now, throw up your hands!"

The bandits were in a trap; Quail was above them and out of reach; they had laid aside their rifles on entering the enclosure; they knew how true was her aim, or, if they doubted it, the stiffening form of Bud Harkins was a vivid reminder. So, when she repeated her command, "Throw up your hands quick, or I'll commence firing," they sullenly obeyed. Then Quail, never taking her eyes from the group of bandits, called "Now, Dad! Get up!" and when the unconscious form did not respond, cried out again, "Dad! Don't you hear? You're safe! I can hold these hounds until you get away." When her second appeal produced no movement or response, a terrible look came over the young face. "Hank Beale," she said passionately, "if you have killed him you shall never go out of Burrell's Billet alive!" and turned her rifle point-blank on the leader.

Beale, thoroughly frightened, called out hastily, "Don't shoot, Quail! He's only stunned; he'll come round all right."

She did not know whether to believe him, but she hoped, oh, so earnestly, that it was true. The strain was beginning to tell on her — she was only a girl after all. Her knees were already trembling, when, with a shout, the Sheriff's posse, headed by Jack Gault, dashed into sight and surrounded the dismantled cabin. Their astonishment was profound at the tableau which presented itself: Two inanimate forms, lying in a pool of blood in the centre of the inclosure; six mountain desperadoes, standing in various attitudes, their hands extended toward the sky, and, over all, the figure of a girl with a rifle in her hand, statue-like on the rocks above. Even as they looked, the figure began to reel and sway, and before Gault could reach it, had sunk to the ground. Her work was done and Quail had fainted.

The Contents of Her Watch.*

BY CARROLL WATSON RANKIN.

UT why such a fuss about one small, trumpery watch? You could buy six like it, and never miss the money."

"I tell you," retorted Adelaide, stamping a small and daintily shod foot, "that unless that watch turns up to-day, I shall leave this place to-morrow."

"But why, Adelaide?"

"Because."

"That's a woman's reason."

"Well, I'm a woman. I say I can't afford to lose that watch."

"Why, Sis, you couldn't pawn that untrustworthy bauble for two dollars, even if you needed the money — which you don't. No sane pawnbroker would advance — "

"Who wants to pawn it? I never thought of such a thing. Do stop your heartless joking. I do want that watch."

"I wish you might have it," said the young man, "if only for my own peace of mind; but it's lost, and that's all there is to it."

"Do you think it's quite hopeless?" asked the girl, eagerly.

"Oh, I don't know. Someone will find it in the sand, some day, when you least expect it."

"Dear me, that's just what I'm afraid of. If I were only sure it would stay lost —— "

"Afraid of, Sis? Afraid of —— "

"Do go to the beach and look. And Percy " — the young woman laid an imploring hand on her brother's arm — "if you happen to find it, promise me, there's a dear boy, promise me you won't open the case."

"Oh, I say," cried the boy, laughing joyously, "that's a good one! A note, eh? or a lock of masculine hair. Which is it?

* Copyright, 1903, by The Shortstory Publishing Company. All rights reserved.

Whose is it? Wardlow's, Wilmington's, Milner's, or the impecunious Bancroft's? My, that's rich! My, that's a joke! That's the reason why I, and no one else, must be the finder!"

"No such thing!" cried the young woman, fairly dancing with rage. "You're the meanest boy —"

The meanest boy threw his indignant sister a kiss, ran down the stairs and down the front steps and turned toward the beach that lay before the cottage, at Druce's Lake.

"There goes Miss Pennington's brother," remarked one of the group on the veranda. "He's going to look again for that watch she lost the other day."

"Strange, isn't it," said the girl in the duck skirt, "that she should make such a fuss over that little enameled affair?"

"Picked it up in Constantinople, didn't she?" asked the man with the golf sticks.

"Some such place. She has six others, they say, to match her gowns."

The silent man behind the newspaper threw his cigar away, tossed his paper aside and sauntered down the steps. The others looked after him and smiled.

"Bancroft's going to blister his aristocratic nose scouring the beach for that precious trifle," said the man with the golf sticks. "Wilmington and Milner ruined their complexions this morning and Wardlow came in with a headache half an hour ago. Bancroft's good-looking, but he doesn't stand a ghost of a show against those chaps."

"She'll take Wardlow," said the girl, nodding wisely. "You see if she doesn't."

Bancroft moved leisurely down the board walk, turned the corner, and quickened his pace. He had remembered seeing Miss Pennington stoop suddenly, three days before, to pick up a shell when they were walking up the beach together. It was barely possible that the tiny watch had slipped from its chatelaine then, although the owner had not missed it until she had gone to her room to change her gown for dinner. He could easily find the place, for he remembered just how she had looked as she had leaned against a certain rough-barked tree while she examined the little shell. He remembered wishing that he were the tree.

The others, including Miss Pennington, had, apparently, not thought of that portion of the beach. The place was some distance up the shore, but that did not matter. Bancroft would willingly have walked ten times as far, if, by so doing, he could win a smile from Miss Pennington.

A smile, indeed, was about all he could reasonably aspire to. The capricious beauty was not only bewilderingly fair, but she was her father's only daughter, and would, presumably, inherit half his fortune. The fact was significant when one remembered that her father was considered the wealthiest man in the state.

Wilmington, at that moment groveling in the sand for the lost treasure could have gone — had he been so minded — to the Orient to purchase a shipload of enameled watches, without disturbing his capital. Wardlow, damaging the knees of his trousers and scraping his knuckles among the gravel, was a rising young lawyer, with a remarkable practice for a man of his years. Milner, wallowing in the mud and groping zealously among evil-smelling water-weeds, would fall heir to a fortune when a certain aged and apoplectic uncle should depart this life.

Bancroft felt that his own case was hopeless against such formidable rivals. His income was fifteen hundred a year.

It occurred to none of these industrious lovers that Miss Pennington might have reasons for wishing that her watch might never be found.

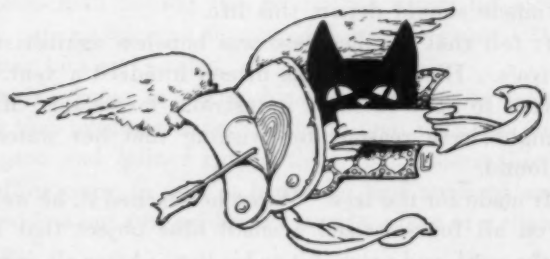
Bancroft made for the tree. When he reached it, he went down suddenly on all fours, seized a small blue object that lay half buried in the sand, and pressed it to his lips. After all, it had been ridiculously easy. There, in the very spot where she had paused to pick up the shell, was the dainty little watch, with its enameled case and slender silver ring. A cheap thing, truly, yet how dear, thought the man, since it was hers. He hoped, since she prized it so highly, that the works were not injured. He would examine it, he would look inside.

He did look. Pasted snugly within the inner case there was a small picture. With a sudden, joyous start, Bancroft recognized his own features in a little kodak photograph that a member of the merry party had taken the previous week.

"This," said Bancroft, staring at his pictured countenance with

hopeful eyes, "may mean much, or it may mean nothing at all; but I intend to find out to-night just what it does mean. Meanwhile (Bancroft was no fool) I shall postpone the discovery of this priceless timepiece to some future date. The dear girl must never suspect that I've seen that blessed picture."

With this, Bancroft dug a little hole in the sand near the tree, buried the watch neatly, and then, with hope bounding high in his heart, walked swiftly homeward.



The Shape of Fear.*

BY VIRGINIA M. CORNELL.

THERE was a story connected with the prenatal existence of Sidney Faramore, as doubtless there may be with many of us, which influenced his after life. Sidney Faramore's mother, the wife of a man whose career had made him enemies, had wakened one night in terror to see by a dim light a man's form bend above her sleeping husband, and a glittering knife strike his breast. To the farthest recess of her being she felt the sudden, waking horror in his heart before death had stilled it, and it was this which gave to the murdered man's son his heritage.

He did not know it by name, this legacy of fear, but even when he was a babe it came to him, and threw him into paroxysms of terror which were long in abating. As a child it dogged his footsteps, and caused him to glance in sudden accesses of fright at the peaceful summer sky and the empty atmosphere. He hated, despised it, his nature was antagonistic to it, but it stayed.

He carried it with him into manhood. He could then look backward through the years which had passed, far back to his earliest recollection, and he could see that the presence of Fear had followed him through them all. As a man, with the courage of a man's strength and reason in him, he had tried many times to face it, and although, even while knowing it was there, he could not identify its personality, he yet determinedly and persistently questioned it.

"You are Fear, that I know," he said to it in the manner of a man demanding satisfaction, "but in what particular guise do you come to me that I should be haunted by you more than another man? Why have you toward me greater enmity than towards thousands of others whom you pass lightly? What is it which

*Copyright, 1903, by The Shortstory Publishing Company. All rights reserved.

gives you to me alone this ever-presentness, that I should feel you when other men feel nothing? Come, answer."

It had been owing to this capacity for putting his accompaniment of dread on the plane of actuality, of forcing it to meet him as it were in open combat, that Sidney Faramore had grown to manhood, clear of brain and strong of heart, with a determination to enjoy what was enjoyable in life in spite of his grim heritage. Thinking of it, he often remembered with a feeling of gratitude his never-seen father, because, from the stories he had in his boyhood heard concerning him, he had retained the belief that, whatever else his father had been, he had been a brave man; and Faramore was conscious of the fact that a legacy of this quality had descended to him along with the other. The nicety with which he had balanced the two had been the means of preserving in him a correctness of mental poise by which he had been enabled thus far to bear a creditable part in life, despite his handicap.

Faramore could well remember how, as a boy of fifteen, he had despised himself for his nightly habit of drawing the bed coverings over his head to shut out the body of terror which he could feel was hovering in the darkness. In growing scorn of his weakness, he had forced upon himself a discontinuance of the habit, waiting rigidly in an extremity of desperate courage for the hovering shape of dread to grasp him. When ten years had elapsed, the experience was not so infrequent as to allow him to forget the taste of it. When, at five-and-twenty, Faramore walked with a firm step nightly to the gas jet beside his mantel and extinguished it, that simple act required a greater bravery than the ordinary man would exercise in facing a cannon. For the ordinary man would have known exactly what he was afraid of, and Sidney Faramore did not. He knew it was a Shape of Fear, an incorporate Dread, but otherwise there was no material name he could give it, save that it was a subtle psychic heritance of birth which he was unable either to dispel or fathom, and which must ever go hand in hand with whatever success or happiness life might afford him.

His ever-returning consciousness of this fact made life, even in its common aspects, strenuous to Faramore; and his constant struggle for mastery over the thing by which he knew himself possessed, the recurring fear that it might some day prove the

stronger and dominate him, gave to his face a peculiar look which differentiated it from the faces of other young men. It gave him a hunted and resistant glance of eye which one would notice as unpleasing without at once perhaps defining; and a distinctly unfavorable impression was the invariable accompaniment of a first meeting with him. Aside from this, Faramore had no cause for being dissatisfied with his material self. He was a good example of young manhood, his body strong and vigorous, his face firmly cut. His shaven lips and chin were resolute, the forehead above his heavy brows and deep eyes indicative of thought. It was only that one noticeable look, that unresting glance suggestive of something out of the under-world, the under side of life which one does not care to see, that gave his face, in spite of handsome outlines, a certain repellence. Faramore himself was conscious of this unpleasant peculiarity, while being powerless to change it, and he saw in it another handicap to his enjoyment of life. He realized it most keenly, however, only when at thirty he became confronted with the passion of love.

The girl was precisely his antithesis. To him she was the embodiment of Calm — the incarnation of white Peace — in the protection of whose arms, wherein had never lain Fear, a man might rest himself from his own weariness of courage. But she, although she became soon aware that Faramore loved her, had nothing to tell her what, in their entirety, his inner thoughts of her were; otherwise, being a woman, and of compassionate heart, she might quite possibly have answered him differently when the moment came than she did answer. Even as it was there were both perplexity and pain in her voice as she said:

"I hope you will believe how sad it makes me that I cannot say to you what you desire, Mr. Faramore. Indeed, I have tried to think that I might be able to say it. And I want to make you quite understand how sincerely I appreciate the honor you have done me in making me your choice, how gratefully I thank you. But — there is something which I cannot explain, — I — cannot love you."

"I can quite understand that much at least," he said in a voice harsh with the courage of a man who has nerved himself to lose, but who has yet not realized how strong had been his hope that he

might win. "It has not been my experience in life that people have rushed to me with their love. Therefore," in a gentler manner, "I shall be all the happier in remembering that you, as you have just told me, would have given me yours if you could. I am not, after all, disappointed; I have never believed really that you would be able to give it to me; but it was my right to ask you, you know."

She suddenly held out her hands toward him. "I wish I could make you know how I shall always remember you," she said, brokenly. Such was Sidney Faramore's love passage.

It was soon after this rejection of him by the girl with peace in her eyes, that Faramore began to make a mark in his profession, that of law. Before this event he had confined himself to civil practice only, having no desire to acquit men of crimes they had probably committed, and yet, from a fellow-feeling toward his kind, not caring to become the cause of disaster to any of them. But at this time he underwent a change. The kindliness of spirit which he had had toward all human beings became changed, as regarded one class at least, into a spirit of anger and hatred. He grew possessed of a vehement desire to see every man who had committed a crime punished, and thus in some sort avenge that one particular crime to whose effects he could directly trace the overthrow of his happiness. Hatred of crime became to him a more strongly personal passion than it had ever before been. So that now, in his pleadings for the prosecution, there came to be, in his determination to convict, an unsuspected, fiery eloquence which made him an object of both hate and dread to the prisoner at the bar, who saw retribution front him in the person of the man with the unyielding face and hunted glance of eye; a glance which in some occult manner communicated to the souls of these men the fearsomeness which was in his own.

For, during these years of unsatisfying effort and undisputed success, Faramore did not lose companionship with that personality of Dread which he supposed would go to his grave with him. The more he flouted it the more it grew in strength, and there came nights now and then when it required what he thought was courage superhuman for him to extinguish his gas jet. Because now, along with that unknown personality of fear, faces came to

him, the faces of men whom he had convicted of crimes; and the malevolence in them, and the terror with which they inspired him, drove him to the verge of what he feared almost more than the other, the weakness of acknowledging himself a coward. In time his existence of struggle began to tell upon him; his shaven chin grew lean, and the look in his deep, resistant eyes more marked.

During these years, too, he had occasional chance meetings with the girl who was the embodiment of calm, and she was still to him what she had been. He could understand how such a thing could be, since her eyes had never beheld Fear. But he thought sometimes that they followed him with a look of regret, and he had impulses toward going to her again, and trying to explain the thing which he knew stood between them. It was only his dread of showing himself to her as a weakling that deterred him.

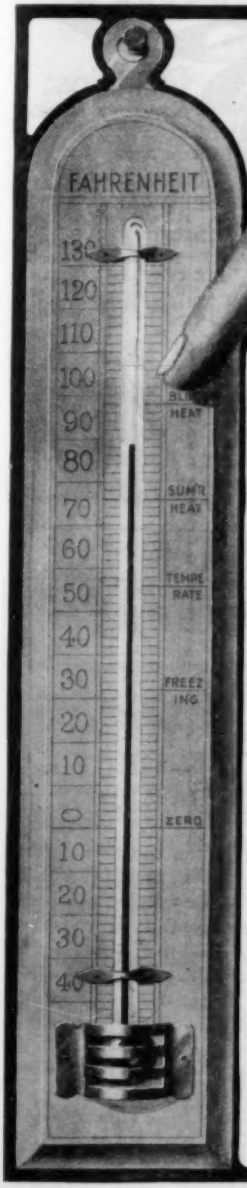
One night — it was rather morning than night, an hour between midnight and dawn when the thoughts of mankind turn most naturally to danger or to crime — Faramore, who had been sleeping soundly, woke suddenly. Immediately there rushed to his eyes a fearful look, a look of expectation verified; for, bending above him in a faint light was a dark form, and an uplifted hand which held a knife. An instant the horrible fear lay in his eyes; then, into the brain behind them flashed a thought which raised Faramore to his elbow with a sharp exclamation; an exclamation so tense, so meaning, so alive with some startling comprehension, that at the sound of it the hand which held the knife dropped inertly.

Into the eyes of the man upon the bed had leaped a look of recognition — the recognition of that which for half a lifetime had pursued and tormented him. Fear took shape at last, and he saw in it now merely a dread of the particular form of death which he knew his father had met. Death itself had no more terror for him than for any brave man, and, strong in his new understanding, Faramore cried out, "I fear no longer!"

He sprang to his feet, facing the man who had come to kill; holding with his dauntless eyes the other at bay. "I fear neither It — nor you," he said, still holding the unwilling gaze of the criminal. "You will be unable to comprehend why, but I am too brave a man to-night for you to kill me."

And under the look and tone of the man he dreaded, the other cowered and was powerless.

Sidney Faramore's cure was complete and certain. His friends marked the change in him, and he himself marveled at the wonderful joyousness of life. And when he sought again the girl who embodied calm, the look which repelled had gone from his face, and she saw there instead what answered doubt, and assured her — happiness.



When It's Hot

you can keep cool by regulating your diet. This for breakfast and luncheon:

FRUIT
A SAUCER OF GRAPE-NUTS, with Cream
EGGS, Soft Boiled or Poached
POSTUM FOOD COFFEE, Iced if you like
ZWEIBACH or TOASTED BREAD

Wonderful how much cooler and clearer and snappier you'll feel, full of energy and go, while your meat fed neighbor may be stupid, covered with prickly heat, and cross as a bear.

Let up on the meats, go slow on the rich desserts and eat no fats or greasy foods at all during hot weather. Put your frying pan away. Sip a little cold water when thirsty. The Grape-Nuts will nourish and sustain you through the day and keep the blood healthy and normal. In the evening after the heat of the day is past eat your heartiest meal, but be moderate and select it with an eye to health.

In this simple and pleasant way you can feed right and feel right and think right. You will be cooler, stronger, healthier and more vigorous mentally and physically. Easily proved by trial.

Grape-Nuts

SEASHORE, LAKE and MOUNTAIN Resorts of EASTERN & NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND and the MARITIME PROVINCES

Reached by the

Boston AND Maine RAILROAD.

FOR ALL PUBLICATIONS APPLY TO
PASSENGER DEPARTMENT, B. & M. R.R.
BOSTON, MASS.
D. J. FLANDERS, Gen'l Pass'r & Ticket Agt.

An illustrated descriptive pamphlet (containing complete maps) have been issued under the following titles, and will be mailed upon receipt of 2¢ in stamps for each book.

All Along Shore
Lakes and Streams
Fishing and Hunting
Among the Mountains
Southeast New Hampshire
Merrimack Valley
Southwest New Hampshire
Lake Sunapee
Valley of the Connecticut and Northern Vermont
Lake Memphremagog
The Moosac Country and Deerfield Valley
The Monadnock Region
Central Massachusetts

Portfolios:
NEW ENGLAND LAKES.
RIVERS OF NEW ENGLAND.
MOUNTAINS OF NEW ENGLAND.
SEASHORE OF NEW ENGLAND.
PICTURESQUE NEW ENGLAND.
HISTORIC — MISCELLANEOUS
THE CHARLES RIVER TO THE HUDSON.
Will be sent upon receipt of 6 cents for each book.

SUMMER TOURIST BOOK
GIVING LIST OF TOURS AND RATES, HOTEL AND BOARDING HOUSE LIST, AND OTHER VALUABLE INFORMATION. FREE.

ALSO COLORED BIRD'S EYE VIEW FROM Mt WASHINGTON SENT ON RECEIPT OF 6cts IN STAMPS.

GIN$ENG Booklet FREE showing how to invest in the GINSENG industry and double your money. Address W. E. BEVERIDGE, Baltimore, Md.

GINSENG

$25,000 made from one-half acre.
The most valuable crop in the world.
Easily grown throughout the U. S. and Canada.
Room in your garden to grow thousands of dollars worth.

ROOTS AND SEEDS FOR SALE.

Send four cents for postage and get Booklet A-G which tells all about it.

McDOWELL GINSENG GARDEN, JOPLIN, MO., U.S.A.

Grow Ginseng

Fortunes Made in Small Gardens

A square rod of ground will easily grow 1000 plants. The roots, seed and young plants from such a bed, if sold at prices now prevailing, would yield over $50,000 within ten years. 400,000,000 Chinese use it as a medicine. It is not an opiate. Supply very limited. Hardy everywhere in United States and Canada. Easy to cultivate in either city or country—your leisure hours will do it.

We sell cultivated roots and seed. Send two 2-cent stamps to help pay postage and get our complete booklet, "Ginseng," and current number of our magazine, "The Ginseng Garden."

Chinese-American Ginseng Co.
Dept. A Scranton, Pa.

"Free from the care which wearies and annoys,
Where every hour brings its several joys."

"AMERICA'S SUMMER RESORTS"

This is one of the most complete publications of its kind, and will assist those who are wondering where they will go to spend their vacation this summer.

It contains a valuable map, in addition to much interesting information regarding resorts on or reached by the

NEW YORK CENTRAL LINES

A copy will be sent free, postpaid, to any address on receipt of a two-cent stamp, by George H. Daniels, General Passenger Agent, New York Central & Hudson River Railroad, Grand Central Station, New York.

Your money back

if you are not satisfied

DO YOU SUPPOSE that a company with a capital of $500,000.00, paid in full, and the proud reputation of 36 years of continuous success, would make such an offer and not carry it out to the letter?

DO YOU SUPPOSE we would jeopardize our standing with the public and our chances of still greater success by failing to fulfil any promise we make?

DO YOU SUPPOSE we would make such an offer if we did not have the utmost confidence in the satisfying quality of our goods?

WE KNOW we can please you and save you money, for HAYNER WHISKEY goes direct from our distillery to you, with all its original richness and flavor, carrying a UNITED STATES REGISTERED DISTILLER'S GUARANTEE of PURITY and AGE and saving you the big profits of the dealers. That's why it's best for medicinal purposes. That's why it's preferred for other uses. That's why we are regularly supplying over a quarter of a million satisfied customers. That's why YOU should try it.

Direct from our distillery to YOU

Saves Dealers' Profits! Prevents Adulteration!

HAYNER WHISKEY

PURE SEVEN-YEAR-OLD RYE

4 FULL QUARTS $3.20 EXPRESS PREPAID

We will send you FOUR FULL QUARTS of HAYNER'S SEVEN-YEAR-OLD RYE for $3.20, and we will pay the express charges. When you receive the whiskey, try it and if you don't find it all right and as good as you ever drank or can buy from any body else at any price, then send it back at our expense and your $3.20 will be returned to you by next mail. How could an offer be fairer? We take all the risk and stand all the expense, if the goods do not please you. Won't you let us send you a trial order? We ship in a plain sealed case; no marks to show what's inside.

Orders for Ariz., Cal., Col., Idaho, Mont., Nev., N. Mex., Ore., Utah, Wash. or Wyo., must be on the basis of **4 Quarts** for **$4.00** by **Express Prepaid** or **20 Quarts** for **$16.00** by **Freight Prepaid.**

Write our nearest office and do it NOW.

THE HAYNER DISTILLING COMPANY

DAYTON, OHIO ST. LOUIS, MO. ST. PAUL, MINN.

DISTILLERY, TROY, O. ESTABLISHED 1866.

DARKEN YOUR GRAY HAIR

DUBY'S OZARK HERBS restore gray, streaked or faded hair to its natural color, beauty and softness. Prevents the hair from falling out, promotes its growth, cures and prevents dandruff, and gives the hair a soft, glossy and healthy appearance. **IT WILL NOT STAIN THE SCALP,** is not sticky or dirty, contains no sugar of lead, nitrate silver, copperas, or poisons of any kind, but is composed of roots, herbs and flowers. It costs **ONLY 25 CENTS TO MAKE ONE PINT.** It will produce the most luxuriant tresses from dry, coarse and wiry hair, and bring back the color it originally was before it turned gray. Full size package sent by mail for 25 cents.

OZARK HERB COMPANY, St. Louis, Mo.

EYE BOOK FREE!

Tells how all Eye and Ear Diseases may be cured at home at small cost by mild medicines. It is handsomely illustrated, full of valuable information, and should be read by every sufferer from any eye or ear trouble. This book is written by Dr. Curts, originator of the world-famed Mild Medicine Method, which without knife or pain speedily cures most hopeless cases. Dr. Curts offers to send this Book absolutely FREE to all who write for it. Address, Dr. F. Geo. Curts, 353 Shukert Bldg., Kansas City, Mo

THE SOUTHGATE PRESS is very successful in producing Catalogues that show goods exactly as they appear when placed before a customer — Booklets that inspire interest in the story they have to tell — Advertising Printing that is distinctive in character and therefore effective in use.

THE PRINT SHOP *at the* SIGN OF THE BAY TREE
181 DEVONSHIRE STREET, *in* BOSTON, V. S. A.

Business Stationery

A handsomely printed letter head or envelope imprint is like a pleasant greeting to your correspondents; the impression it makes on customers is worth considering.
The T. W. RIPLEY Co. possesses every facility for supplying *attractive* business stationery at moderate prices.

A SPECIAL OFFER

During the month of August we will print on an excellent grade of stock and in one color of ink

250 LETTER HEADS
250 BILL HEADS
250 STATEMENTS
250 ENVELOPES
250 BUSINESS CARLS

for the regular price, $10.00
less 25% for
cash with order, or
$7.50

NOTE. — This assortment may be varied — thus: 500 Letter Heads, 200 Bill Heads, 100 Statements, 350 Envelopes, 100 Cards — but the total number of pieces must not exceed 1250.

T. W. RIPLEY COMPANY, PRINTERS
42 ARCH STREET, BOSTON, V. S. A.

YOUR CIGARS FREE FOR ONE YEAR

TURNING OUR BACKS ON WELL-BEATEN PATHS.

A SIMPLE business proposition. What you ordinarily spend over the retail counter for cigars in one year will, if spent with us, the manufacturers, furnish you with another year's smoking **FREE.**

A cigar as good as you now smoke—perhaps even better—for **ONE-HALF** what you ordinarily pay at retail.

We have turned our backs on the wholesaler, to whom for years we have been selling millions of our celebrated brands, and now go to you **Direct,** offering them by the box at precisely the same prices.

This means one-half the price you have been paying at retail.

Your taste exactly suited, our statements positively guaranteed, or

. Your Money Back

We prepay all charges and hand you your smokes delivered to your door at a saving of 50 per cent. We make for you the cigar you like, not the one people say you ought to like.

We will at first send you assortments from which to make selections. For **60** cents, an assortment of 12 cigars showing ten-cent and two-for-a-quarter values; for **35** cents, 12 high-grade fives; for **$1.00,** a trial box of 25 cigars, showing fifteen 10-cent values and ten straight 5-cent cigars; for **$1.25,** an assortment of 25 ten-cent and three-for-a-quarter values, each separately wrapped and described, showing you how two-for-a-quarter and ten-cent cigars can be bought in boxes of 25 and 50 for from four to six cents each, others from two to three cents each. **All Transportation Charges Prepaid,** or let us send you our free illustrated booklet, "ROLLED REVERIES."

ALLEGHENY, PA.—"Your cigars are perfectly satisfactory except in one respect; when one was smoked the temptation was too strong to repeat the operation." (Name supplied on request.)

JOHN B. ROGERS & CO. ("The Pioneers"), 243 Jarvis St., Binghamton, N. Y.

$5.00 Per hundred for addressing envelopes, send dime and stamp for full instructions. Steady work.
C. E. MILLER & CO., Dept. M, Ely Bldg., Chicago.

Too Fat

Don't ruin your stomach with a lot of useless drugs. Our method is perfectly safe, natural and scientific. It strengthens the heart, allows one to breathe easily and takes off Double Chin, Big Stomach, Fat Hips, etc. Send your address and 4 cts. to the Hall Chemical Co., "Box K. A.," St. Louis, Mo., for Free trial Treatment. No starving. No sickness. It reduces weight from 5 to 15 lbs. a month, and is perfectly harmless.

GINSENG

Seeds and roots for sale. Most valuable and profitable crop in the world. Room in your garden. Send 4c. postage for big illustrated book. **Ginseng Culture** magazine, 25c. a year.
OZARK GINSENG CO., Dept. B, Joplin, Mo.

BIG MONEY IN MAIL-ORDER BUSINESS

People are buying more by mail than ever before; one mail-order house does a business of a million dollars monthly; another receives 2,000 letters daily, nearly all containing money; mail-order trading is unquestionably the business method of the future. The field is large, the possibilities unlimited. Let us send you our plan (free) for starting beginners; it covers every point.
CENTRAL SUPPLY CO., 1020 Grand Ave., Kansas City, Mo.

TO FAT PEOPLE

I can reduce your weight 3 to 5 pounds a week without any radical change in what you eat; no nauseating drugs, no tight bandages, no sickening cathartics. I am a regular practicing physician, making a specialty of the reduction of surplus flesh; and after you have taken my treatment a few weeks you will say: "I never felt better in my life."

SAFE, PROMPT AND CERTAIN

By my treatment your weight will be reduced without causing wrinkles or flabbiness of skin; heavy abdomen, double chin or other evidences of obesity will disappear; your form will acquire symmetry; complexion will be cleared; troubles of heart, kidneys, stomach or other organs will be remedied; and you will be delightfully astonished at the promptness and ease with which these results are accomplished under my system. Satisfaction guaranteed. Write for my new book on "Obesity, its Cause and Cure," which will be sent sealed in plain envelope. It will convince you.

Mention THE BLACK CAT when writing.

HENRY C. BRADFORD, M. D., 24 East 22d St., New York

PIANOS

Built of the world's best for the world's most critical

For HOMES *of* CULTURE
For ARTISTS
For MUSICIANS

THE artistic beauty and refined appearance of the 1903 models sustain our reputation for leadership in ornate case work, while the choice veneers of our present stock stand unexcelled and augment our reputation as connoisseurs of rare woods. The peculiarly rich singing quality of tone of "CROWN" pianos pleases all and will elicit your unbounded praise. Clearly a piano of distinct artistic merit.

Send for booklets, catalogue, and other printed matter giving full information how to secure, wherever you may live, a "CROWN" Piano, exchanging your used instrument as part pay if you desire.

GEO. P. BENT

Manufacturer "CROWN" PIANOS AND ORGANS
BENT BLOCK CHICAGO U. S. A.

DIAMONDS ON CREDIT

IF YOU are interested in Diamonds, you will want a copy of our **NEW SUMMER CATALOGUE**, for it shows the latest creations in artistic Diamond mountings, fine jewelry and watches. These new and fine goods you will not find illustrated in the catalogues of other houses until next fall, for we are the only house in the Diamond and Jewelry business which issues a complete catalogue between seasons. Everything illustrated is quoted at exceptionally low prices and sold on the **POPULAR LOFTIS SYSTEM** of easy payments. Select any article that you like and it will be delivered at your door with all express charges paid. Only one-fifth of the price need be paid at first; the balance being arranged in a series of small monthly payments extending over eight months. No security is required; no interest is charged and no publicity is created when you buy on our **CONFIDENTIAL CHARGE ACCOUNT SYSTEM.** If you make a selection it will be upon the distinct understanding that your money will be promptly returned in case you decide not to purchase. We are the largest concern in the business and sell only the finest genuine goods, and at prices ranging from ten to twenty per cent below those of other houses. Every Diamond is sold under a written guarantee of quality and value and may be exchanged at any time in the future for other goods or a larger stone at the full original price. **Our Confidential Credit System** is open to all honest persons without regard to their financial worth; but if you prefer to buy for **spot cash** we make the most startling and liberal offer ever made. It is no less than guaranteeing the return of all money paid at any time within one year—less ten per cent, the reasonable cost of doing business. We are one of the oldest houses in the trade (Est. 1858). We refer to any bank in America—for instance, ask your local banker to consult his Dun or Bradstreet book of commercial ratings and he will tell you that we stand at the top in credit, reliability and promptness. We have a number of attractive booklets that we will be glad to send you if you write promptly for **our New Summer Catalogue.**

LOFTIS BROS. & CO.
Diamond Importers and Manufacturing Jewelers
Dept. H-52, 92 to 98 State St.
Opposite Marshall Field & Co.
CHICAGO, ILL.

PHOTOS FROM LIFE

Model studies, Stereos, Beauties, etc., 100 small photos and two large ones, $1 note.
S. Recknagel, Nachf. Munich (Germany).

I Print My Own Cards

Circulars, Newspaper, Press **$5.** Larger size, **$18.** Money saver. Big profits printing for others. Type-setting easy, rules sent. Write for catalog, presses, type, paper, &c., to factory.
THE PRESS CO., Meriden, Conn.

WOMEN TO SEW at home. $1.50 per day.

All material free paid. Send reply envelope for particulars and **Testimonials from Ladies now Sewing.**
Universal Co., Dept. 211, Walnut St., Philadelphia, Pa.

TELL FORTUNES

with **WIZARD CARDS.** Future truthfully revealed. To convince you we will send cards Free for stamp. **C. Velaro, 208 W. 42d St., New York.**

HOT SELLER for Agents

Sells everywhere and to everybody. A bonanza for picnic, fair, show and street salesmen. Wonderful invention.

CYCLONE ROTARY HAND FAN

It's a summer cooler and generates a strong draft of air with no exertion except a slight movement of the thumb. Fan is made of aluminum, has few parts. Light, simple, noiseless and artistic. MILLIONS will be sold. ☞ Price postage paid 25 cents. Agents and dealers WANTED. Big profits. Write for terms and "Bonanza" list of up-to-date, not "worked-to-death" sellers. Address
B. C. KRUEGER MFG. CO., Chicago, Ill.

LEARN TO ENTERTAIN

Five (5) Good Tricks, complete apparatus, full directions, post free **15 Cts.** Catalogue free. Book of **"CARD TRICKS"** 129 Pages, 25 cts. TRICK CARDS, 10 cts. Both Post Free, 30 cts.
BAILEY & TRIPP CO.
Manufacturers of Magical Apparatus,
Box B. C., Cambridgeport, Mass.

300 FOREIGN STAMPS, 10c. 104 var. from Malta, Bulgaria, etc., **10c.** 200 var. **25c.** 300 var. **50c.** 500 var. **$1.25.** 1000 var. **$4.00.** 40 var. U. S. **10c.** 32-page list free. Agents wanted. Stamps on approval at 50 per cent.
K. Crowell Stamp Co., 143 Euclid Av., Cleveland, O.

A Chance

to secure rare China, Glass Ware, Antique Furniture, and articles of Historic Value, some of which are more than

100 Years Old

The collection includes:—

Platters of Indian Pagoda Ware
Cut Glass Decanters
Andirons
Spinning Wheel
Warming Pan
Mahogany Card Table
Mahogany Chairs
Musket of Revolutionary War
Musket of 1812

Also Britannia Teapots, Indian Baskets, Sheffield Plate Candlesticks, Brass Candlesticks, Atlantic, St. Nicholas, Century and Harpers Magazines of 1851-2 and 53.

Address: Antiques, 74 S. Willard St., Burlington, Vt.

MANY ADVANTAGES.

Perfect in fit, never ragged or uncomfortable. Very convenient, stylish, economical. Made of fine cloth and exactly resemble linen goods. Turn down collars are reversible and give double service.

NO LAUNDRY WORK.

When soiled, discard. **Ten collars or five pairs of cuffs, 25c. By mail, 30c.** Send 6c. in U. S. stamps for sample collar or pair of cuffs. Name size and style.

REVERSIBLE COLLAR CO., Dept. O, Boston.

2000 Revolutions a Minute! **FAN $1.50**

Measurement 10 ins. Throws air equal to any $15 electric fan.

RUNS BY WATER

Can be connected in any room or to any spigot.

Fed by $\frac{1}{16}$ in. Hole

Descriptive Circular "E" free on request.

AGENTS WANTED.

Delaware Rubber Co., 631 Market St., Phila., Pa.

A Vacation Hint To You!

Read the announcement on third page of cover of this issue of The Black Cat.

"The Busy Man's Train"

Appropriate in its Name,

Appropriate in its Route,

Appropriate in its Character---

"The 20th CENTURY LIMITED."

This is *The* century of all the ages. The New York Central's 20-hour train between New York and Chicago (the two great commercial centres of America) is *The* train of the century, and is appropriately named

"The 20th CENTURY LIMITED."

A copy of "America's Summer Resorts" will be sent free, postpaid, on receipt of a postage stamp by George H. Daniels, General Passenger Agent, New York Central & Hudson River Railroad, Grand Central Station, New York.

The Latest Poetic Success

Songs of the Press

By BAILEY MILLARD

See how it has pleased the critics:

"There is a ringing and virile quality about Mr. Millard's best verse that will produce a reaction in the most sluggish of readers. The cast of his thought is not pale, but ruddy with the glow of spiritual health."— The Intel.

"Represents vividly phases of modern journalism as seen from the inside."— The Criterion.

"Mr. Millard has something distinct to say and says it without self-consciousness.— Chicago Tribune.

"Deft versification and thorough knowledge of the newspaper kingdom."— Boston Advertiser.

"A very fine volume of verse."— Boston Globe.

"This book is written for those who enjoy real poetry that comes from the heart."— George Hamlin Fitch in San Francisco Chronicle.

"The poems all are worthy of much praise. Some of them are rare gems."— Pittsburg Press.

"Mr. Millard has sentiment, appreciation, and the true poetic fancy. He is blessed with a sound philosophy."— Brooklyn Eagle.

"Here is a volume of verse that anybody who cares at all for verse will find pleasure in reading."— New York Sun.

Published by

ELDER & SHEPARD

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

Sent postpaid on receipt of price, 75 cents, net

MAKE YOUR BABY COMFORTABLE

Quilted mattress protectors keep the crib clean and sweet—and the mattress always in a sanitary condition. These pads are quilted of bleached muslin, with pure white wadding of the finest grade between. Baby will be kept dry and free from fretting in warm weather. They wash perfectly. Good as new after laundering. Made in sizes to fit any bed or crib. Write for Free Sample. **Excelsior Quilting Co., 15 Laight St., N. Y.**

AGATE NICKEL-STEEL WARE

We Make 1520 Kinds of Kitchen Utensils

There is a BLUE LABEL attached to every piece of AGATE NICKEL-STEEL WARE as a guaranty of Absolute Purity.

NO POISON

has ever been found in the enamel

IF SUBSTITUTES ARE OFFERED, WRITE US.

Department & House-Furnishing Stores everywhere sell them.

LALANCE & GROSJEAN Mfg Co NEW YORK CHICAGO BOSTON

AGATE NICKEL-STEEL WARE Mfg. & Co.

SEND FOR BOOKLET.

FAT IS FOLLY

when it can be reduced easily, conveniently and best of all, **Safely**, by the use of

La Parle OBESITY SOAP.

This **Obesity Soap** (used like an ordinary soap) positively reduces fat, without dieting or gymnastics. Absolutely harmless, never fails to reduce flesh when directions are followed.

Send for book of testimonials. Box of 2 cakes sent prepaid on receipt of **$2.00.**

Norwood Chemical Co., St. James Bldg., N.Y.

LADIES to do piece work at their homes. We furnish all material and pay from $7 to $12 weekly. Experience unnecessary. Send stamped envelope to ROYAL CO., Dept B. C., 34 Monroe St., Chicago, Ills.

FREE We give one beautiful rolled gold solitaire Puritan rose diamond ring, solid-gold pattern, for selling 20 packages Garfield Pepsin Gum, at 5 cents a package. Finest quality; easy sale. Send name; we mail gum. When sold send money; we mail ring. 7th year. Hundreds of thousands pleased customers. Catalog free showing hundreds premiums.

GARFIELD GUM CO., Box 709, MEADVILLE, PA.

LIVER TONIC
Cascarets
CANDY CATHARTIC

10c, 25c, 50c. ALL DRUGGISTS

BEST FOR THE BOWELS

NEVER SOLD IN BULK

CURE all bowel troubles, appendicitis, biliousness, bad breath, bad blood, wind on the stomach, bloated bowels, foul mouth, headache, indigestion, pimples, pains after eating, liver trouble, sallow complexion and dizziness. When your bowels don't move regularly you are getting sick. Constipation kills more people than all other diseases together. It is a starter for the chronic ailments and long years of suffering that come afterwards. No matter what ails you, start taking CASCARETS to-day, for you will never get well and be well at the same time until you put your bowels right. Take our advice; start with CASCARETS to-day, under an absolute guarantee to cure or money refunded. 495

GUARANTEED TO CURE: Five years ago the first box of CASCARETS was sold. Now it is over six million boxes a year, greater than any similar medicine in the world. This is absolute proof of great merit, and our best testimonial. We have faith and sell CASCARETS absolutely guaranteed to cure or money refunded. Go buy to-day, two 50c boxes, give them a fair, honest trial, as per simple directions, and if you are not satisfied, after using one 50c box, return the unused 50c box and the empty box to us by mail, or the druggist from whom you purchased it, and get your money back for both boxes. Take our advice—no matter what ails you—start to-day. Health will quickly follow and you will bless the day you first started the use of CASCARETS. Book free by mail. Address: STERLING REMEDY COMPANY, NEW YORK or CHICAGO.

MORPHINE
PAINLESS AND PERMANENT
A Trial Treatment Free
HOME CURE

other drug habit. Contains Vital Principle heretofore unknown and lacking in all others. We restore the nervous and physical systems and thus remove the cause. Confidential correspondence invited from all.

Sent to any one addicted to the use of Morphine, Opium, or

ST. PAUL ASSOCIATION, Suite 804, 46 Van Buren St., Chicago, Ill.

IS YOUR HUSBAND, SON OR FATHER A

Drunkard

If so, send us your name & address, we will send you a package of our "Secret Cure" free, in a plain package with full directions how to give it secretly in tea, coffee, food, etc. It is odorless & tasteless, & will cure this dreadful habit, quickly & permanently without the patient's knowledge or consent. It is a positive & permanent "Secret Cure" for the Drink Habit & will cost you nothing to try it.

MILO DRUG CO. Dept. 72 St. Louis, Mo.

Makes Women Beautiful

Marvelous development accomplished by the new and wonderful "Vestro" method of enlarging the Female Bust.

Flat-chested and unattractive women are quickly developed into commanding figures that excite wonderment and admiration.

A new and surprisingly effective home treatment has been discovered that enlarges the female bust at least six inches. Women who are not lacking in this respect will not be particularly interested, but those who by some unfortunate circumstance of health or occupation are deficient in this development will be very much fascinated by the peculiar prominence achieved by the treatment. It is called "Vestro" and is controlled by the well known Aurum Medicine Co.

There is no doubt about the marvellous power of this new treatment to develop the bust to a gratifying extent. Any lady who wishes to know more about Vestro should send her name and address to the Aurum Medicine Co. They will send free, in plain sealed envelope by mail, a new "beauty book" they have just prepared, also photographs from life showing the actual development induced and a great number of testimonials from physicians, chemists, and prominent ladies all commending the wonderful and remarkable power of Vestro to enlarge the bust no matter how flat the chest may be. Do not fail to write at once. The beauty book and portraits will delight you. All you need do is to send name and address and a two-cent stamp to pay postage. Address

AURUM MEDICINE CO., Dept. D. A., 55 State St., Chicago.

MORPHINE

OPIUM and **LAUDANUM** habits cured by **OPACURA**, a painless home treatment, endorsed and used by leading physicians. A TRIAL TREATMENT sufficient to convince you it WILL CURE, sent FREE, with book of testimonials sealed. Correspondence Confidential.

OPA SPECIALTY CO., Dept. A, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.

OPIUM

MORPHINE and LIQUOR Habits Cured. Sanatorium Established 1875. Thousands having failed elsewhere have been cured by us. Treatment can be taken at home. Write

The Dr. J. L. Stephens Co., Dept. B 9, Lebanon, O.

Be Your Own Boss!

MANY MAKE $2,000.00 A YEAR. You have the same chance. Start a Mail Order Business at home. We tell you how. Money coming in daily. Enormous profits. Everything furnished. Write at once for our "Starter" and FREE particulars.

B. C. KRUEGER CO., 155 Washington Street, Chicago, Ill.

YOUR FORTUNE TOLD FREE

From cradle to grave—past, present, and future correctly treated and success assured in love and business. Mysteries revealed. My horoscopes are wonderful diviners; send date of birth and stamp, and I will send you, entirely free, a horoscope of your life, or if you will send 10c. I will also send a description of the person you should love, and sample copy of my wonderful magazine. They call me the wonder of the twentieth century, because of my true predictions. I believe I can make you successful if you heed my advice. Write at once and let me read your life as the stars reveal it. Address

PROF. R. A. ASTRO, Box 3693, PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Dress for Comfort

Because of their construction

PRESIDENT SUSPENDERS

give most

Comfort & Service

Guaranteed "All breaks made good"
"President" on buckle means
"Cannot rust" 50c. *and* $1.00
Any shop or by mail prepaid
The C. A. Edgarton Mfg. Co.
Box 201 O, Shirley Mass
Send 6c. for Catalogue

BE YOUR OWN CHIROPODIST. We have a handsome 20-page illustrated booklet on "How to have Easy, Healthy, Shapely Feet," which we will mail to any address for a 2c. stamp. Bunions **CAN** be cured. The booklet tells you how to do it in your own home without cutting and without the slightest inconvenience. It also tells about the prevention and removal of corns, ingrowing toe-nails and the treatment of all kinds of foot troubles Agents.
FOOT REMEDY CO., Suite 547, 59 Dearborn St., Chicago.

BONDS

BE SAFE WHEN YOU INVEST!
Only Take Secured Offerings

The bond issue of a new palatial hotel, in denomination $25 and $100 is offered for public subscription, with the advantage of having interest and the entire principal secured by a strong bank's collateral deposit. These bonds participate in the dividends and should give bondholders an extra income of 10 per cent. per annum; an investment for the conservative investor, the cautious capitalist, and an ideal investment for trust funds; can be held for advance in price or for investment.

SAMUEL JAROS,
27 William St., N. Y.

We Could brew beer for half our cost

We could cut down half on materials.

We could save what we spend on cleanliness.

We could cease filtering our air.

We could send out the beer without aging it for months — but the beer would then cause biliousness.

We could save what it costs to sterilize every bottle — an expensive process.

Yet You would pay the same

Common beer — brewed without all our precautions — costs you no less than Schlitz Beer.

When you can get a pure beer — a healthful beer — at just the price of a poor beer, isn't it wise to ask for Schlitz?

Ask for the brewery bottling

Get On Board!

Here are Tidings of Comfort and Joy. A Cure for the Blues! If you want to reap its benefit, pass along your quarter quickly or the supply will be exhausted. The following stories carry with them a Guarantee of Forty Happy Half-hours.

Margaret Kelly's Wake. S. C. Brean.	**$500 Prize.**	
The Father of His Country. Frank E. Chase.		
When Time Turned. Ethel Watts Mumford.	**$125**	"
An Arizona Pastoral. Frank H. Mayer.		
The Vanishing Window. Richard Barker Shelton.		
How David Came Home. H. A. Fillmore.	**$125**	"
Pericles P. Pemberton: Cured. Jessie Reno Odlin.		
The Blue Light on the Mountain. Paul Crandall.		
The Pocket of Goat Island. Henry Reed Taylor.	**$100**	"
The Phantom Dromedary. Henry A. Thompson.		
Gentlemen Unafraid. Florence Guertin Tuttle.		
Born Tired. James D. Ellsworth.		
The Invisible City. Frank Lillie Pollock.		
A Bridegroom's Substitute. Mary Van Brunt Hunter.	**$200**	"
The Strayed Finger. John Walcott.		
The Man Who Found Zero. Ion Arnold.		

The Well-bred Young Lady in a Barber Shop at Midnight.

(There was given to The Authors' Club of Louisville, Ky., the problem of writing a short story in which a well-bred young lady has to find herself, in a natural manner, in a barber shop at midnight, and as a result the following five tales were produced.)

A Hair-breadth 'Scape.	Margaret Steele Anderson.
The Pink Umbrella.	Evelyn Snead Barnett.
Force of Circumstances.	Mary F. Leonard.
The Golden Tresses.	Mrs. Attwood R. Martin.
Ladies' Night.	Alice Caldwell Hegan.

The Gargoyle Room. Anna McClure Sholl.		
Hapwell's Experiment. Ernest Kent Coulter.		
The Funeral at Paradise Bar. Paul Shoup	**$100 Prize.**	
Without Publicity. Nathaniel P. Babcock.		
The Cold Storage Baby. Eva L. Ogden.		
The Burglar Bridegroom. Cally Ryland.		
The Jockey Who Went to Sleep. Louis Weslyn.	**$200**	"
Auxons. Julia Truitt Bishop.	**$100**	"
Lights Out! Frederic Laurence Davis.		
The White Death. Don Mark Lemon.		
The Freeze That Thawed Her. Walter E. Andrews.	**$200**	"
An Unsolicited Custodianship. David B. Fitzgerald.		
The Double Wedding at Section Thirty. H. Crafts.		
The Thousandth Chance. Richard Barker Shelton.		
Rance. Bland Brunner Huddleston.	**$125**	"
The Desert's Gold. Robert Roberts.	**$250**	"
Billmyer's Sprinkling Machine. George N. McCain.		
The Man Under the Tree. Don Mark Lemon.	**$100**	"
An Act of Piracy. Albert Sonnichsen.		

Money cannot buy more fascinating reading matter than the above tales, which helped THE BLACK CAT win the title, "The story-telling hit of the age." For 25 cents we will mail the eight numbers containing the 40 stories. **Order to-day, as the numbers are rapidly going out of print.**

THE SHORTSTORY PUBLISHING COMPANY, Boston, Mass.